Christ Alone Exalted:

Elisa St. Clair

BEING THE

COMPLEAT WORKS

OF

TOBIAS CRISP, *D. D.*

Sometime Miniſter of the Goſpel

At *Brinkworth*, in *Wiltſhire.*

CONTAINING

Fifty-Two SERMONS,

On ſeveral Select Texts of SCRIPTURE.

In TWO VOLUMES.

To which are now added,

NOTES explanatory of ſeveral Paſſages in them, with ſome Memoirs of the Doctor's Life, *&c.*

By JOHN GILL, *D. D.*

" This Work favours of a true Goſpel-Spirit; though ſome " Expreſſions, taken by themſelves, without any relation " and coherence to the Matters handled in it, may ſeem " harſh; yet I am perſuaded they are all capable of a good " Conſtruction, and were ſo intended by the Author: They " who carp at them, I fear, will be found wider from the " Goſpel, in their Principles, than this Author was in his." *Mr.* Thomas Cole, *Author of a Treatiſe on* Regeneration, *and ſometime a Lecturer at* Pinner's Hall.

VOL. I.

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M.DCC.LV.

Jane Hume-Campbell


BRITISH MUSEUM
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THE EDITOR TO THE READER.

THE following ſermons were preached near a hundred and twenty years ago; which will account for the ſtile and manner in which they were compoſed and deliver'd by the worthy author of them: they were all publiſhed after his death, being taken from him, whilſt preaching them, in ſhort-hand-writing, and compared with his notes, or taken from them. And as they were not deſigned nor prepared for the preſs by the author, they, no doubt, appeared with leſs accuracy than otherwiſe they would, had they been reviſed by him; who, very probably, would have left out ſome things delivered from the pulpit, at leaſt have altered the phraſeology and diction, if not ſome paſſages which needed explanation, and have been ſince matter of controverſy, and for which reaſon, they muſt now be continued. Forty two of theſe diſcourſes were publiſhed quickly after the death of the author, in the years 1643, 44,--46. *in three volumes* 12mo. *with recommendatory prefaces by Mr.* Robert Lancaſter, *Mr.* George Cokayn, *and Mr.*

Henry Pinnel. *In* 1690, *a new edition of theſe ſermons was printed with an addition of ten more, taken from the author's notes, by his ſon* Samuel Criſp, *Eſq; this edition is in quarto, and is very incorrect, as well as imperfect, and occaſioned a warm controverſy among ſome worthy good men about ſome points herein advanced; on account of which the learned* Witſius, *profeſſor of divinity at* Utrecht, *a writer often mentioned in the following notes, wrote an* Irenicum, *worthy to be read by both parties. The republication of theſe diſcourſes is not deſigned to revive the controverſy; and the Editor flatters himſelf, that he has, by his notes, explained ſuch phraſes and expreſſions as have been objected to, and ſet them in ſuch a light as to prevent any captious perſon that might be inclined to engage in ſuch work from doing it. In ſhort, the ſole view in republiſhing theſe excellent ſermons which were wanted, being ſcarce and not eaſy to come at, is the ſame with the pious author's in preaching them; namely, the relief of diſtreſſed minds and conſciences burdened with a ſenſe of ſin, and ſeeking for deliverance from it; for which theſe diſcourſes are moſt admirably calculated, as has been experienced by thouſands of ſouls; and it may be hoped under a divine bleſſing, that this will be the caſe of every one that reads them with ſuch a view; and for which purpoſe, they are ſincerely and heartily recommended, by*

The EDITOR.

MEMOIRS

Of the LIFE, *&c.* of

TOBIAS CRISP, D. D.

TOBIAS CRISP, deſcended both by father and mother from the richeſt families of the city of *London*, in which they had borne the higheſt offices; he was the third ſon of *Ellis Criſp*, a rich merchant and alderman of the ſaid city, (as his father before him had been) and was ſheriff of the ſame when he died, *Nov.* 13, 1625. Sir *Nicholas Criſp* was the elder brother of *Tobias*, a perſon of great capacity for buſineſs, a rich and induſtrious merchant, was taken notice of at court in the reign of king *Charles* the 1ſt, by whom he was knighted, and made one of the farmers of his cuſtoms; he was a famous royaliſt in the times of the civil wars, did much ſervice to the king, and ſuffered much in his cauſe; he was one of the committee ſent by the city of *London* to king *Charles* the 2d, at *Breda*, to invite him over, by whom he was received with peculiar marks of affection as his father's old friend; and, upon the king's reſtoration, was re-inſtated into his poſt as one of the farmers of the cuſtoms, and was created a baronet *April* 16, 1665, and died *Feb.* 26, following.

Wood's *Athenæ*, vol. II. p. 11. 12.

Biographia Brittanica, p. 15, --22, &c.

Tobias was born in *Bread-ſtreet*, *London*, in the year 1600, and had his education for grammar-learning in *Eaton*-ſchool near *Windſor*, and began his academical ſtudies in the univerſity of *Cambridge*, where he continued until he commenced batchelor of arts; and from thence he removed to *Oxford*, for the finiſhing of his ſtudies, and attaining ſome certain parts of learning, and was incorporated a member of *Baliol*-College in *Feb.* 1626. When he received the degree of doctor in divinity is not certain, only it appears, that, upon the breaking out of the civil wars, he had been of ſome years ſtanding in that degree.

Wood's *Athenæ* Ibid.

In the year 1627, and about the 27th year of his age, he became Rector of *Brinkworth* in *Wiltſhire*, where he continued untill the time of the civil wars, and was much followed for his edifying way of preaching, and for his great hoſpitality to all perſons that reſorted to his houſe. His way of preaching tended to edification, being ſpiritual and evangelical, and ſuited to the caſe of ſouls made truly ſenſible of ſin; and adapted to their condition, and to the peace and comfort of them, as well as was plain and familiar and eaſy to be underſtood by thoſe of the meaneſt capacity; as appears by the following diſcourſes, in which he often illuſtrates the deepeſt myſteries of grace by things common among men, and known to all. And, as he had a plentiful eſtate of his own, he was liberal and hoſpitable to ſtrangers that came far and near to attend upon his miniſtry; and, according to good information from ſome of his deſcendants, an hundred perſons, yea, and many more, have been received and entertained in his houſe

Wood *Ib.*

houſe at one and the ſame time, and ample proviſion made for man and horſe.

He ſet out firſt in the legal way of preaching, in which he was exceeding zealous, and had an earneſt deſire to glorify God in his life and miniſtry; nor did he ſeek for, but refuſed all, worldly advancement, to which his way was open thro' his parentage and friends; but gave himſelf up wholly to the preaching of the word, and a conſcientious practice of it, and was unblameable in his life and converſation; none being more, and few ſo, conſtant in preaching, praying, repeating ſermons, performing public, family, and private exerciſes, in the ſtrict obſervation of the duties of the Lord's-day: nor did he at all abate, but increaſed, in his zeal for glorifying God in this way, after he had a clearer knowledge of Chriſt, and of the doctrines of grace; working from better principles, and with better views, willing to ſpend, and be ſpent, for the ſervice of the meaneſt of God's people; being far from pride, vanity, and ſelf-conceitedneſs, and full of meekneſs, lowlineſs, and tender-heartedneſs; whereby it appeared, that the goſpel of Chriſt had a very great influence upon his ſoul, and which engaged him to preach it freely without any expectation of worldly advantage, and in a way which was ſure to bring upon him not the credit and eſteem of men, but reproach and perſecution, his doctrine being falſely charged with *Antinomianiſm*; tho' the innocency, and harmleſsneſs of his life, and his fervency in goodneſs, as Mr. *Lancaſter* obſerves, was a manifeſt practical argument to confute the ſlanders of ſatan, againſt the moſt holy faith which he preached. Mr. *Neal* ſays,

Lancaſter's preface to vol. III. of the Dr's ſermons.

Hiſt. of the *Puritans*, vol. iii. p. 18.

ſays, that the Dr. in his younger days had been a favourer of *Arminianiſm*; but, changing his opinion, he ran into the contrary extreme of *Antinomianiſm*. That he was inclined to *Arminianiſm*, if not in it, and went on in the legal way of preaching for ſome time, is certain; which he relinquiſhed upon a rich experience and clear knowledge of the free grace of God in Chriſt; but, that he went into real *Antinomianiſm*, muſt be denied; his ſermons upon *Free grace the teacher of good works*, and *The uſe of the law*, with others, abundantly prove the contrary. However, the above writer is pleaſed to give this character of him, that "he was certainly a learned and religi- "ous perſon, modeſt and humble in his behaviour, "fervent and laborious in his miniſterial work, "and exact in his morals". Nor does he want the teſtimonies of men of the greateſt figure, in learning and religion, to his character and uſefulneſs; particularly the famous Dr. *Twiſſe*, prolocuter to the aſſembly of divines, and whom ſome have called *Flos ſcholaſticorum*, thus, on occaſion, expreſſed himſelf concerning him; that he

Mr. *Samuel Criſp*'s preface to Chriſt made ſin, p. 4.

"had read Dr. *Criſp*'s ſermons, and could give no "reaſon why they were oppoſed, but becauſe ſo "many were converted by his preaching, and (ſaid "he) ſo few by ours". That excellent *Dutch* profeſſor of divinity *Hoornbeeck*, calls him a learned divine, and ſays, "*Pervolvi ego tres voluminum* "*libellos* Tobiæ Criſpi, *doct. theologi, quorum titulum* "*fecit*, Chriſt alone exalted"; and obſerves, that he, with others of the ſame principles, had no ill deſign, but that the glory of Chriſt might the more appear, caſt down all the works, diſpoſitions,

Sum. Cont. p. 702. l. 10.

and

and conditions of men, and confidence in them, beſides him. That truly good man Mr. *Cole*, the author of a valuable treatiſe on *Regeneration*, declared, that if he had but one hundred pounds in the world, and Dr. *Criſp*'s book could not be had without giving fifty pounds for it, he would give it rather than be without it; ſaying, "I have "found more ſatisfaction in it, than in all the "books in the world, except the bible." Mr. *Samuel Criſp*'s preface, *ut ſupra.*

When the Dr. entered into the marriage-ſtate is not certain; very probably about the time, or before, he became Rector of *Brinkworth*, as ſhould ſeem by the number of children he had, he dying in 1642. He married *Mary Wilſon*, daughter and heireſs of *Rowland Wilſon* of *London*, merchant. She was ſiſter to the famous colonel *Rowland Wilſon*, who was ſo diſtinguiſhed in the times of the civil wars; who, tho' he was heir to 2000 l. *per annum* in land, and partner with his father in a large perſonal eſtate employed in merchandize, yet, for the ſervice of God, and the good of his country, took upon him the command of a city-regiment under the parliament. He was one of the truſtees for the ſale of deans and chapters lands, and muſter-maſter-general of the forces of *Warwick* and *Coventry*; was appointed a commiſſioner of the high-court of juſtice for the trial of the king, but refuſed to act; was member of parliament, and alderman, and ſheriff of the city of *London*; the accepting of which laſt office was voted, by the parliament, an acceptable ſervice to the common-wealth; he was of the council of ſtate for the year 1649, and died quickly after, being attended to his grave by the members of parliament

Whitelock's memorials, *&c.* p. 72,--363, 384,-390, 394,-398 425,-428

ment and council of ſtate, the lord-mayor and aldermen, divers citizens of *London*, and officers of the army, the city-regiment, of which he was colonel, and other companies of ſoldiers. He died before his father, who gave the greateſt part of his ſubſtance to the children of Dr. *Tobias Criſp*, and his widow, who ſurvived the Dr. thirty-one years, ſhe dying the 20th of *Sept.* 1673; by whom he had thirteen children, two died before him, and he left eleven behind him; their names were *Rowland*, *Ellis*, *Mary*, *Tobias*, *Samuel*, *Eſther*, *Edward*, *Rowland*, *Nicholas*, *Elizabeth*, *Anne*, *Jane*, *John*. His ſon *Samuel*, who was one of the governors of *Chriſt-Church*-Hoſpital, *London*, publiſhed the laſt edition of his father's works, with a preface to them; and wrote ſeveral things in defence of them; one called, *Chriſt made ſin*; another, *Chriſt alone exalted* in Dr. *Criſp*'s ſermons; a third, *Chriſt exalted, and Dr.* Criſp *vindicated*. He was one of the firſt that joined in the communion of the church, at *Clapham*, *Surry*, in the nonconformiſts way, and the ſurvivor of them all. He died *June* 20th, 1703.

Mr. *Criſp*'s pref. *&c. ut ſupra.*

Mr *Grace*'s funer. ſermon, p. 41.

But, to return to the Dr. upon the breaking out of the civil wars, and to avoid the inſolence of the cavalier ſoldiers, he left his rectory of *Brinkworth* in *Aug.* 1642, and retired to *London*; where, and about it, he preached ſeveral of the ſermons afterwards printed; whereby his ſentiments about the doctrines of grace were ſoon diſcovered, in which he was oppoſed by the city-divines; and (to uſe Mr. *Wood*'s words) was baited by fifty-two opponents in a grand diſpute concerning the freeneſs of the grace of God, in Jeſus Chriſt, to

Athenæ, p. 11.

poor

poor ſinners; by which encounter, which was eagerly managed on his part, he contracted a diſeaſe that brought him to his grave. He died of the ſmall-pox, *Feb.* 27th, 1642, being about forty-two years of age, and was buried in a vault, belonging to his family, under part of the church of St. *Mildred* in *Bread-ſtreet*, *London*.

So, (as Mr. *Lancaſter* ſays) after his natural ſtrength was inſenſibly ſpent, in the ſervice of the Lord, by conſtant and laborious preaching, praying, repeating, and ſtudying, often-times whole nights, to the impairing and ruining of his health, it pleaſed the Lord to call him, by his laſt viſitation, unto his eternal reſt; wherein there appeared ſuch faith, ſuch joy, ſuch a quiet and appeaſed conſcience, ſuch triumph over death and hell, as made the ſtanders-by amazed; and, a little before his death, he profeſſed, before ſome preſent, the ſtedfaſtneſs of his faith, to this effect, "that as he had lived in the free grace of God, thro' Chriſt, ſo he did, with confidence and great joy, even as much as his preſent condition was capable of, reſign his life and ſoul into the hands of his moſt dear Father."

Lancaſter's pref. *&c. ut ſupra.*

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SERMON

SERMON I.

Chriſt the Only Way.

JOHN xiv. 6.

I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me.

IN the 35th verſe of the former chapter, you ſhall find Chriſt breaking the ſad and doleful buſineſs, which he knew well would go near to the hearts of his diſciples, namely, his departure from them: *Little children, yet a little while ye ſhall ſeek me, but ſhall not find me. Peter* upon this, aſks him, whither he goes? He tells him, whither he cannot follow him now, but afterwards he ſhall. Now knowing how ſadly this went to the hearts of his diſciples, he laboured to raiſe them up, and to eſtabliſh them againſt the drooping that theſe ſad tidings might occaſion; and that is in the beginning of this chapter, *Let not your hearts be troubled:* and therein doth endeavour to ſtir up their ſpirits: *Firſt*, by telling them the expediency of that de-

parture of his; it was the purpoſe of God, that as all things ſhould be wrought effectually by Chriſt, ſo the communication of all theſe things to our ſpirits, ſhould be by the Spirit of Chriſt. Now Chriſt tells them expreſly, *That except he goes away, the Comforter cannot come to them*; he, that muſt have the diſpenſing of thoſe things to their ſpirits, namely the Comforter, cannot come unto them. But, *ſecondly*, he ſtays not here; he encourageth them with another argument, *I go to prepare a place*; and he tells them the place where; *In my Father's houſe are many manſions.* And, leaſt they ſhould ſuſpect, he tells them, *If it were not ſo, I would have told you.* And becauſe he would not ſpeak in a cloud of theſe things, he tells them, *You know whither I go, and the way ye know.* Now *Thomas* comes in with an objection; *We know not whither thou goeſt, and how can we know the way?* Chriſt anſwers him in the words of the text, *I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me.*

I will not ſpin out time about the coherence and analyſis of this text: the main point is briefly this:

Chriſt is our way, ſo that there is no coming to the Father but by Him.

In the handling of which truth, let me tell you, that I know this doctrine is generally received, as it is generally delivered; but, I fear, in the particulariſing thoſe things that make up the full truth of the doctrine, every ſpirit will not, nor can receive it. That you may, at leaſt, ſee



ſee the clear truth, in the bowels of this general doctrine; (for, beloved, you muſt know there is hidden manna in this very pot) I ſay, that you may both ſee it, and taſte the ſweetneſs of it, let us conſider, *Firſt*, In what regard Chriſt is ſaid to be *the way to the Father*. *Secondly*, What kind of way he is. *Thirdly*, From whence he doth become this way. And, *Fourthly*, What uſe we may make of it.

Firſt, in what ſenſe Chriſt is ſaid to be our way, that there is *no coming to the Father but by him*. You all know, beloved, that every way, high-way, or path-way, neceſſarily imports two terms, from whence and whereunto; when a man enters into a way, he leaves the place where he was, and goes to the place where he was not. Chriſt being our way, the phraſe imports thus much to us, that by Chriſt we paſs from a ſtate and condition wherein we were, to a ſtate and condition wherein we were not; the laſt term is expreſſed in the text, *He is the way to the Father*; the firſt term muſt be implied. To come to him, we muſt leave ſome condition where we were before. Bear a while with the expreſſion, till I open the thing to you.

The ſtate, from which Chriſt is our way to the Father, is two-fold; *firſt*, a ſtate of ſin; and, *ſecondly*, a ſtate of wrath; the ſtate whereunto Chriſt is the way, is, indeed, expreſſed here to be to the Father; the meaning is, to the grace of the Father, and to the glory of the Father. The ſum is this, Chriſt is ſo our way, from a ſtate of ſin

and wrath, to a ſtate of grace and glory, that there is no coming from the one to the other, but by Chriſt. But we muſt deſcend to particulars that we may know the fatneſs and marrow of this truth; which indeed hath an inebriating vertue in it, to lay a ſoul a-ſleep, with the admirable ſweetneſs and excellency thereof; no muſick can tickle the ears as this truth may, when it is truly and thoroughly dived into; no, nor tickle the heart neither. Beloved, I muſt tell you, when your ſouls once find this real truth, they cannot chooſe but ſay, we have found a ranſom.

Firſt of all, Chriſt is a way from a ſtate of ſinfulneſs. Now what myſtery is there in this, more than ordinary, will you ſay? Beloved, it is certainly true, there is nothing of Chriſt, there is nothing comes from Chriſt, but it is in a myſtery; the goſpel ſeems to be clear, and ſo it is, to thoſe whoſe eyes Chriſt opens, but certainly it is hid to ſome perſons that ſhall periſh. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them to babes; even ſo, O Father, becauſe it pleaſed thee.* But what hiddenneſs is in this? There is a two-fold conſideration of ſinfulneſs, from which Chriſt is our way in a ſpecial manner. There is, *firſt*, that which commonly we call, the guilt of ſin, which indeed is the fault, or a perſon's being faulty, as he is a tranſgreſſor. There is, *ſecondly*, the power or dominion of ſin. Chriſt is the way from both theſe. Firſt of all, Chriſt is the way from the guilt of

ſin;

ſin; for a man to be rid of the guilt of ſin, is no more but this, namely, upon trial to be acquitted from the charge of ſin, that is laid to him, and to be freed from it; or for a perſon, in judgment, to be pronounced actually an innocent and a juſt perſon, as having no ſin to be charged upon him: this is to be free from the guilt of ſin. A man is not free from a fault, as long as the fault is laid to his charge; he is then free from the fault, when it is not charged upon him. All the powers of the world united, are not able to pronounce a perſon a faultleſs and an innocent perſon, but only the power of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. He alone is the way, by which a poor ſinner, even in this world, may be pronounced an innocent perſon; even in this world, I ſay, and acquitted and diſcharged from the fault and guilt of his ſin. It is impoſſible the law ſhould do it; the apoſtle ſpeaks it expreſsly, *Rom.* viii. 2. *The law of the ſpirit of life in Chriſt hath freed me from the law of ſin and death.* Here it is put upon Chriſt, to free from the guilt of ſin. *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the fleſh, for ſin, condemned ſin in the fleſh. The law*, ſaith the text, *could not do it*; not that the law could not pronounce innocence where innocency was; not that the law could not condemn ſin, where it is condemnable by its authority: the law can do this, if it can find ſubjects whereupon to do it. But the law runs upon theſe terms, as it finds a perſon himſelf without fault, ſo it pronounceth ſentence upon

him; if it finds a fault in his perſon, then it chargeth this fault upon the perſon alone, as thus: *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.* 'Till then thou canſt not be abſolutely freed from the acting of a thing, in its nature that is faulty; thou canſt not hear it ſpeak any otherwiſe but of faultineſs, which it chargeth upon thee.

Much leſs can the heart of man acquit him as an innocent perſon, or do away from him that ſinfulneſs, namely, the guilt of his own ſin. *If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts. If a man ſay he hath no ſin, he is a liar,* ſaith St. *John, and the truth is not in him.* If the heart ſhould ſay to any man he is an innocent perſon, it doth but lye.

If angels ſhould ſpend their ſtrength, and ſhould be annihilated, to procure the innocency of a poor ſinner; alas, their very being is too poor a price, or too mean a value to take away the ſins of the world.

Beloved, to go a little farther in it, it is not man's righteouſneſs, that he does, though aſſiſted by the Spirit of God in the acting of it, that can pronounce him an innocent perſon, that can be a way to him from his fault and guiltineſs. This you know, that the payment of the laſt half year's rent, is no payment for the firſt half year's rent, nor is it amends for the non-payment of that which was due before; if that had been paid before, this likewiſe muſt be paid now. Suppoſe a man

a man could perform a righteous action without blame, what ſatisfaction is this for former tranſgreſſions? Nay, beloved, let me tell you, there is nothing but menſtruouſneſs, as the prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaks, in the beſt of man's righteouſneſs, *all our righteouſneſs is as a menſtruous cloth:* But as for Chriſt, that bleſſed Saviour, he is able to *ſave to the uttermoſt them that come to God by him*; not only to ſave them, in reſpect of glory hereafter, but alſo to ſave them in reſpect of ſinfulneſs here; to ſnatch them, as a fire-brand, out of the fire of their own ſin, to deliver them out of their own tranſgreſſion. Chriſt, I ſay, is the way, and the abſolute and complete way, to rid every ſoul, that comes to God by him, from all filthineſs; ſo that the perſon, to whom Chriſt is the way, ſtands in the ſight of God, as having no fault at all in him. Beloved, theſe two are contradictions, for a perſon to be reckoned a faulty perſon, and yet that perſon to be reckoned a juſt or an innocent perſon; if he be faulty, he is not innocent; if he be innocent, he is not faulty. Now it is the main ſtream of the whole goſpel, that Chriſt juſtifies the ungodly; if he himſelf juſtifies him, there is no fault to be caſt upon him; mark it well, as that wherein conſiſts the life of your ſoul, and the joy of your ſpirits; I ſay it holds forth the Lord Chriſt, as freely tendering himſelf to people, as conſidering them only as ungodly perſons receiving him; you have no ſooner received him, but you are inſtantly juſtified by him, and, in this juſtification, you are

diſcharged from all the faults that may be laid to your charge. There is not one ſin you commit, after you receive Chriſt, that God can charge upon your perſon [a].

A man would think, that there needs not much time to be ſpent to clear ſuch a truth as this is, being ſo currently carried along by the whole ſtream of the goſpel. But, beloved, becauſe I know tender hearts ſtumble much at it; give me leave to clear it unto you, by manifeſt ſcriptures, ſuch as are written in ſuch great letters, as he that runs may read them: obſerve that in *Pſalm* li. *Waſh me*, ſaith *David*; what then? *I ſhall be whiter than ſnow.* Snow, you know, hath no ſpot at all, no fault, no blemiſh. *David* ſhall be leſs blameable, have leſs faultineſs, have leſs ſpottedneſs in him, than is in the very ſnow itſelf. In *Canticles* iv. 7. you ſhall find Chriſt ſpeaking ſtrange language to his church, admirable language indeed; *Thou art fair my love*, ſaith Chriſt, *thou haſt no ſpot in thee at all.* I do but cite the very words of the text, therefore let none cavil, leaſt they be found fighters againſt God; *ſhe hath no ſpot in her.* In *Iſaiah* liii. where he ſpeaks admirably concerning the effectualneſs of Chriſt's death, he tells us, *That the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all*; thy iniquities, my iniquities; as our fore-

[a] That is, to condemnation; becauſe all have been charged on Chriſt, and he has made ſatisfaction for them; and beſides, in this manifeſtative juſtification the Dr. is ſpeaking of, there is an open and full diſcharge from all ſin.

forefathers iniquities, ſo our poſterities iniquities; the iniquities of us all the Lord hath laid upon Chriſt; they cannot lie upon Chriſt, and upon us too: if they be reckoned to the charge of Chriſt, they are not reckoned to the charge of the perſon that doth receive this Chriſt: but *The Lord hath laid them upon him*, ſaith the text. And what iniquity? Doth he lay upon him ſome iniquity, and leave ſome iniquity to us? Look into *Ezekiel* xxxvi. 25, and you ſhall there ſee the extent of iniquities that God hath laid upon Chriſt; that he takes away from the ſinner, I mean the ſinner juſtified by Chriſt that received him: there you have the covenant largely repeated, the new covenant; not according to the covenant God made with our fathers: and the firſt words of the covenant are theſe, *I will ſprinkle you with clean water, and ye ſhall be clean from all your filthineſs, and from all your idols will I cleanſe you.* From all your filthineſs; ſmall ſins, as ſome will call them; great ſins, turbulent ſins, ſcandalous ſins, any ſins, any filthineſs; I will cleanſe you from all your filthineſs, and from all your idols. Look into *Ezek.* xvi. 7. a notable chapter indeed, ſetting open the unſearchable riches of the love of Chriſt to men; *I found thee polluted in thy blood*, ſaith he; ſuch blood *that no eye could pity thee, or do any good to thee.* Well, no creature doth pity him, was it ſo with God? No. *When I ſaw thee polluted in thy blood, I ſaid unto thee, live; yea when I ſaw thee polluted in thy blood, I ſaid unto thee, live; when I paſſed by thee, thy time*

was

was the time of love, ſaith God, *I ſpread my ſkirt over thee*; mark it, I pray you; not a ſcanty ſkirt to cover ſome of this blood and filth, but a broad ſkirt, a large ſkirt, a white raiment, as Chriſt calls it himſelf, as he ſpeaks to the church in the *Revelation*; *I counſel thee to buy of me white raiment, that thy nakedneſs may not appear.* It ſeems there is ſuch a covering of Chriſt, that he caſts upon a perſon, while he is conſidered in his blood, that covers his nakedneſs, that none of it doth appear; and yet a little further in *Ezek.* xvi. then was ſhe dyed deep in water, after ſhe was in covenant; *yea I thoroughly waſhed away thy blood:* and this was added, that no man might cavil. It is true, God caſts a covering over our ſinfulneſs, but it is our ſinfulneſs ſtill, it is but covered; nay, ſaith the Lord, I have waſhed it away, *then waſhed I thee with water.* But ſome will ſay, theſe are obſcure texts and myſtical; a man cannot build upon theſe, that faultineſs is not reckoned to believers, being taken off by Chriſt. To come therefore to a clearer manifeſtation of the goſpel, mark what the apoſtle ſaith in *Epheſians* v. 25. Chriſt *purges and ſanctifies his church, that he might preſent it to himſelf, not having ſpot, or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing, but that it may be holy, and without blame.* The words run in the preſent tenſe; not that in glory only we ſhall be without ſpot, but now, even now, we ſhall be without blemiſh, we ſhall be without ſpot and wrinkle; and that he might now preſent us to himſelf. So in 2 *Cor.* v. 21. you ſhall ſee the truth

truth ſpoken more emphatically, the apoſtle runs in a mighty ſtrain in this buſineſs; *He was made ſin for us, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* Both terms are expreſſed in the abſtract; he was made ſin for us; here you ſee plainly, our ſins are ſo tranſlated to Chriſt, that God reckons Chriſt the very ſinner [b]; nay God reckons all our ſins to be his, and makes him to be ſin for us; and what is the fruit of this? We are thereby made the righteouſneſs of God in him. If we be righteouſneſs, where is our ſinfulneſs to be charged upon us? he tells us expreſsly, in 1 *John* i. 7. *That the blood of Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin*; the blood of Chriſt doth cleanſe us: he doth not ſay, the blood of Chriſt ſhall cleanſe us from all ſin; but he ſaith, for the preſent time, the blood of Chriſt doth cleanſe us from all ſin. *John* the *Baptiſt* hath this expreſſion, *Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the ſins of the world.* He takes them away. How doth he take them away, and yet leaveth them behind, and yet charge them upon the perſon that doth believe? The perſon muſt be diſcharged, or elſe how can they be taken away. This is the main thing imported in that notable ſacrifice of the ſcape-goat, *Lev.* xvi. 21. The high-prieſt muſt lay his hand upon the head of the goat to be carried away into the wilderneſs; the text ſaith, *It was the laying the ſins of the people, and that when they were laid upon him, he goes into the wilder-*

[b] That is, by imputation; not as the author and committer of ſin; and, in the ſame way, God reckons our ſins to be Chriſt's; not as committed by him, but as imputed to him.

wilderneſs. He goes not into the wilderneſs and leaves their ſins behind him; then the end of this ſervice were fruſtrated; for he was to carry them away that were laid upon him: ſo Chriſt, as the ſcape-goat, hath our ſins laid upon his back, and he carries them away; and therefore in *Pſalm* ciii. 12. it is ſaid, *That God removes our ſins from us as far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt; he caſts our ſins into the bottom of the ſea.* Beſides all theſe texts of ſcripture, I might produce multitudes more, if need were, to this purpoſe; but, I think, there can be nothing in the world more clear than this truth, that Chriſt is ſuch a way to a poor believing ſoul, that he hath received, that he might take and carry away all the ſins of ſuch a perſon; that he is no longer reckoned as having ſins upon him.

But ſome will object, Do not thoſe, that receive Chriſt, actually commit ſin?

I anſwer, Yea, they do commit ſin, and the truth is, they can do nothing but commit ſin. If a perſon, that is a believer, hath any thing in the world, he hath received this; that if he doth any thing that is good, it is the Spirit of God that doth it, not he; therefore he himſelf doth nothing but ſin; his ſoul is a mint of ſin. But then you will ſay, If he doth ſin, muſt not God charge it where it is? Muſt not he be reckoned to be a ſinner, while he doth ſin? I anſwer, No; though he doth ſin, yet he is not to be reckoned a ſinner[c], but

[c] Not that the believer, who has received Chriſt, ceaſes to be a ſinner in himſelf; for the Dr. affirms, in this ſame paragraph,

but his ſins are reckoned to be taken away from him. A man borrows an hundred pounds; ſome man will ſay, Doth not he owe this hundred pounds, ſeeing he borrowed it? I ſay, No, in caſe another hath paid the hundred pounds for him. A man doth ſin againſt God, God reckons not his ſin to be his, he reckons it Chriſt's, therefore he cannot reckon it his. If the Lord did lay the iniquity of men upon Chriſt, (as I ſaid before) then how can he lay it upon their perſons? Thou haſt ſinned, Chriſt takes it off; ſuppoſing, I ſay, thou haſt received Chriſt. And as God doth reckon ſin to Chriſt, and charges ſin upon him, ſo, if thou be of the ſame mind with God, thou muſt alſo reckon this ſin of thine upon Chriſt; his back hath borne it, he hath carried it away.

For my part, I cannot ſee what every perſon will object; I will endeavour to make this truth clear as the day to you. Do but conſider with yourſelves what Chriſt came into the world for, if not to take away the ſins of the world? He need never to have died, but to take away the ſins of the world. Did he come to take them away, and

graph, that he commits ſin, and does nothing but ſin; and much leſs that he ceaſed to be a ſinner, before he was a believer, or from the death of Chriſt, as D. W. in his *Goſpel-Truth, &c.* falſly aſcribes to him, on account of this paſſage: but the ſenſe is, that a believer having received Chriſt, is not reckoned as a ſinner, in the ſight of God, and in the eye of juſtice, and as conſidered in Chriſt, all his ſins being charged to him, and expiated and atoned for by his ſacrifice; as alſo, ſeeing ſuch a one has received, with Chriſt, a diſcharge from all his ſins into his own conſcience, he ſhould reckon himſelf, and his ſins, as God does, who reckons them to Chriſt, and not to him.

and did he leave them behind him? Then he loſt his labour. Did he not leave them behind him? then his perſon is diſcharged of them from whom he hath taken them: but if the perſon be not diſcharged of them, he is not a juſtified perſon in himſelf; neither can you account his perſon juſtified, as long as you account his ſin upon him. It is a contradiction to ſay, that a man is innocent, yet nocent. Beloved, then here is a point of ſtrange raviſhing uſefulneſs to ſouls, that can but draw towards it and receive it. All the difficulty lies, whether it be my portion, and thy portion; whether I may ſay, Chriſt is my way, thus from this guilt, that there can be none of this charged upon me: I ſay, if thou doſt receive Chriſt, if thou doſt but ſet footing into this way, Chriſt; as ſoon as ever thou are ſtept into this way, thou art ſtept out of the condition thou waſt in. Mens receiving of Chriſt! what is that, you will ſay? To receive him, is to come to him; *He that comes to me, I will in no wiſe caſt off.* Mark, many think there is ſuch a kind of ſinfulneſs, that is a bar to them, that though they would have Chriſt, yet there is not a way open for them to take him. Beloved, there is no way of ſinfulneſs to bar thee from coming to Chriſt; if thou haſt a heart to come to him, and, againſt all objections, to venture thyſelf with joy into the boſom of Chriſt, for the diſcharge of all thy ſinfulneſs; Chriſt himſelf (which I tremble to expreſs, tho' it be with indignation) he ſhould be a liar, if thou comeſt to him,

and

and he caſts thee off. *Every one that will*, ſaith he, *let him come and drink of the water of life freely.* You ſhall find, beloved, the great complaint of Chriſt, thus, *He came to his own, and his own received him not*; and to the Scribes and Phariſees, *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.* The truth is, men dote upon the eſtabliſhing of a righteouſneſs of their own to bring them to Chriſt; and it is but preſumptuous, or licentious doctrine, that Chriſt may be their Chriſt, and they receive him, and be conſidered ſimply ungodly, as enemies: but they are abominably injurious to the faith of Jeſus Chriſt, to the exceeding bounty of that grace of his, who ſaves from ſin, without reſpect of any thing in the creature, that he himſelf might have the praiſe of the glory of his grace. The covenant, concerning the blotting out of tranſgreſſions, is a free covenant; *Not for thy ſake do I this, be it known unto thee*, ſaith the Lord, *for thou art a ſtubborn and ſtiff-necked people; but for my own ſake do I this.* All this grace to acquit thy ſoul, here and hereafter, comes out of the bowels of God himſelf; and he hath no other motive in the world, but ſimply, and only, his own bowels, that put him upon the deliverance of a poor wretch from iniquity, and diſcharge of ſin, from that load which otherwiſe would grind and cruſh him to powder: I ſay, his own bowels are the motive. God neither looks to any thing in the creature to win him to ſhew kindneſs, nor yet any thing in the creature to debar him; neither righteouſneſs in men that perſwades God to pardon

don ſin; nor unrighteouſneſs in men that hinders him from giving this pardon, and acquitting them from their tranſgreſſions; it is only and ſimply for his own ſake he doth it unto men.

Thus you have ſeen the firſt particular, that I have endeavoured to clear from all cavils and objections that may be laid upon it.

In one word, beloved, miſtake me not, I am far from imagining any believer is freed from acts of ſin; he is freed only from the charge of ſin; that is, from being a ſubject to be charged with ſin; all his ſins are charged upon Chriſt, he being made ſin for him; yet Chriſt is not an actual ſinner; but Chriſt is all the ſinners in the world by imputation[d]; and through this imputation all our ſins are ſo done away from us, that we ſtand as Chriſt's own perſon did ſtand, and doth ſtand in the ſight of God. Now, had not Chriſt made a full ſatisfaction to the Father, he himſelf muſt have periſhed under thoſe ſins that he did bear; but in that he went through the thing, and paid the

[d] This ſhews what is the Dr's true ſenſe in a former paſſage, p. 11. where he ſays, Chriſt is *the very ſinner*; that is, by imputation, as here explained, and not an actual ſinner. One would be tempted to think, at firſt reading this clauſe, that the Dr. was for univerſal redemption, when he ſays, that Chriſt is *all the ſinners in the world* by imputation; and, perhaps, ſuch expreſſions as theſe, with ſome others that will be obſerved hereafter, made the learned *Hoornbeck* conclude, that he held the doctrine of univerſal redemption; but his ſenſe is not, that Chriſt perſonated all the ſinners in the world, or had all the ſins of every individual perſon laid on him; but that he was all thoſe ſinners in the world, or repreſented them, whoſe ſins were imputed to him; and theſe, as he often ſays in his ſermons on *Iſaiah* liii. 6. were the iniquities of the Lord's people, of the church, and of the elect.

the full price, as he carried them away from us, ſo he laid them down from himſelf. So that now Chriſt is freed from ſin, and we are freed from ſin in him; he was freed from ſin imputed unto him and laid upon him, when he ſuffered; we were freed from ſin as he takes it off from our ſhoulders, and hath carried it away; *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden.* That is, with ſin. And what follows? *And I will give you reſt.* As long as the burthen is upon the ſhoulders, ſo long there is no reſt. Therefore this doth neceſſarily import, that Chriſt muſt take away the burthen, that we may have reſt.

Secondly, Chriſt is not only the way from the fault of ſin, but he is the way from the power of ſin. There is a threefold power of ſin; there is *firſt*, a reigning power; and *ſecondly*, a tyranizing power; and *thirdly*, a buſtling or ruffling power of ſin; and they are all three of them diſtinct. Chriſt is a way from all theſe in believers: from the reigning power of it; ſo the apoſtle ſpeaks expreſsly, *Rom.* vi. 14. *Sin ſhall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace.* Grace there is Chriſt himſelf. *His ſervants ye are, to whom ye obey, whether of ſin unto death, or of righteouſneſs unto life; but, thanks be to God, ye have obeyed the truth.* The meaning is this; while we are under the law, and have no better help, ſin reigns in us, the law cannot bridle it in; but when we come under grace by Chriſt, the dominion of the law, or rather the dominion of ſin, which the

law cannot reſtrain, is captivated and ſubjected by Chriſt; *I will ſubdue your iniquities*, as it is ſpoken by the prophet *Micah*. We are diſcharged from the fault and guilt of ſin, that is, abſolutely at once; but the diſcharge from the reigning power of ſin, that is done by degrees; the faultineſs of ſin is left behind the back of the believer, but the power and reſiſtency of ſin lie all along in the way; but ſtill Chriſt breaks through, and makes way, 1 *Cor.* x. 13. where you have this admirable expreſſion, *No temptation hath happened unto you, but ſuch as is common to men; God is faithful, and will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation make a way that you may be able to bear it.*

There is a tyranizing power of ſin, that is, not when ſin is choſen of the ſoul, as that under which the ſoul both affects and will live; but when ſin hath gotten a preſent over-maſtery of the ſoul, and, in ſpight of all the ſpirit can do, will keep it under. This, I ſay, is the tyranny of ſin; and this was the caſe of the apoſtle *Paul*, *Rom.* vii. *When I would do good, evil is preſent with me: I find a law in my members warring againſt the law of my mind, bringing me into captivity to the law of ſin; ſo that the good I would do, I do not; and the evil that I would not, that do I.* In regard of which he makes a bitter complaint; but mark the end of all, *But thanks be to God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Here you ſee, that though ſin hath a tyranny over the ſpirit

rit of a perſon, yet through the Lord Jeſus Chriſt this tyranny is abated.

Yet, *Thirdly*, it is abated by degrees; for the buſtling power of ſin, namely, though it cannot be entertained, yet it will be troubleſome to the ſoul. Now Chriſt is the way, by degrees, alſo, from this trouble of ſin; for by degrees he crucifies the fleſh with the affections and luſts thereof, and brings down the power of it by treading down ſatan, that is the egger on of ſin, to make it ſo troubleſome; by overcoming the world, that adminiſters occaſion of this troubleſomeneſs; *Fear not*, ſaith Chriſt, *I have overcome the world.* But ſtill, I ſay, he doth this by degrees, and ſo he doth it by degrees, that ſometimes he lets the work be at a ſtand; and ſometimes the tyranny ſhall be over the ſpirit, and the ſpirit ſhall be under that tyranny a good while; ſometimes the ſpirit ſhall be under the troubleſomeneſs of ſin, and be conſtantly exerciſed with it. But you muſt know, that it is neither the tyranny, nor the troubleſomeneſs of ſin in a believer, that doth eclipſe the beauty of Chriſt, or the favour of God to the ſoul. Our ſtanding is not founded upon the ſubduing of our ſins, but upon that foundation that never fails; and that is Chriſt himſelf, upon his faithfulneſs and truth. Men think they are conſumed, when they are troubled with ſin: Why? becauſe of their tranſgreſſion. But mark what the Lord ſaith; *I, the Lord, change not; therefore ye ſons of* Jacob *are not conſumed.* It is not, *you* change not, therefore ye are not conſumed;

but *I* change not; I have loved you freely, I will love you freely, I cannot alter: *Whom he loves, he loves unto the end*; it is in reſpect of his unchangeableneſs.

Though there be ebbings and flowings of the outward man; nay, of the inward man, in the buſineſs of ſanctification; yet this is certainly true, *That believers are kept by the mighty power of God, through faith, unto ſalvation.* They are kept in holineſs, ſincerity, ſimplicity of heart; but all this hath nothing to do with the peace of his ſoul[e], and the ſalvation and juſtification thereof: Chriſt is he that juſtifies the ungodly; Chriſt is he that is the peace-maker; and as Chriſt is the peace-maker, ſo all this peace depends upon Chriſt alone. Beloved, if you will fetch your peace from any thing in the world but Chriſt, you will fetch it from where it is not. *This people* (ſaith the prophet *Jeremy*) *hath committed two evils.* What are they? *They have forſaken me, the fountain of living waters, and have digged to themſelves ciſterns, broken ciſterns, that will hold no water.*

What is that fountain of living waters? Chriſt is the fountain of peace and life; and men forſake that peace that is to be had in Chriſt, when they would have peace out of righteouſneſs of their own, out of their great enlargements, out of humiliations. Theſe are broken ciſterns, and what

[e] That is, to make peace with God for his ſoul, ſince Chriſt is the peace-maker, ſaviour, and juſtifier; otherwiſe to be kept in theſe things contributes to ſpiritual peace of mind, under the influence of divine grace, and ſprinkling of the blood of *Jeſus*.

what peace is there in them? Is there not ſinfulneſs in them? Who can ſay, I have waſhed my hands? If there be ſinfulneſs in them, where then is their peace? Sin ſpeaks nothing but war to the ſoul. Let me tell you, beloved, you that look after peace from the ſubduing of you ſins; what peace can it afford you, in caſe there be any defects of ſubduing of your ſins? There can be no peace.

Suppoſe God had nothing in the world to charge upon you, but only that ſinfulneſs in the very ſubduing of your corruptions, what peace could you have? what could not God find in us? Suppoſe your eyes were enlightened to ſee yourſelves, how much filthineſs there is in all your wreſtlings; I ſay, how much defects and infirmities might you ſee? Could you chooſe but fall foul upon your own ſpirits, for theſe infirmities and defects of your beſt performances, ſeeing the wages of ſin is death? What can you run to then? None but Chriſt, none but Chriſt. While your acts, in reſpect of filthineſs, proclaim nothing but war, Chriſt alone, and his blood, proclaim nothing but peace. Therefore, I give this hint by the way, when I ſpeak of the power of Chriſt ſubduing ſin; becauſe, from the power of it in men, they are apt to think their peace depends upon this ſubduing of ſin. If their ſins be ſubdued, then they may have peace; and if they cannot be ſubdued, then no peace: fetch peace where it is to be had; let ſubduing of ſin alone for peace [f]; let

[f] Let it be obſerved, that the Dr. is ſpeaking not of ſubduing ſin, as it is an act of God's grace, and owing to the power

Chriſt have that which is his due; it is he alone that ſpeaks peace. It remains, we ſhould ſpeak further, that as Chriſt is a way from ſin, both in reſpect of fault and power, ſo he is a way from wrath; and he is a way to the grace and glory of the Father, and what kind of way he is. But the ſearching into every corner of this truth, for the ſifting of it, hath brought me exceedingly back beyond my expectation. I ſhall have further occaſion in the afternoon to ſpeak of it.

SERMON

power of Chriſt, who has made an end of it, and ſo made peace; on this ſubduing of ſin peace depends, *Mic.* vii. 18, *Deut.* ix. 24. but of men's ſubduing ſin, by their own power and ſtrength, and in order to make peace with God; whereas ſubduing ſin, or mortifying the deeds of the body, believers are concerned for, is not of themſelves, and done in their own ſtrength, but through the ſpirit, power, and grace of God; and not to make peace with him, but to ſhew their diſlike of ſin, their gratitude to God, and that they are debtors to him, to live after the ſpirit, *Rom.* viii. 12, 13. wherefore ſubduing of ſin is to be let alone for the end mentioned, in order to peace with God, that Chriſt might have his due and glory, who has both made and ſpeaks peace; otherwiſe ſubduing of ſin, or the weakening the power of it, by the ſpirit and grace of God, is the concern of every believer, and is wiſhed for by him, and makes for the tranquility of his mind.

SERMON II.

Chriſt the Only Way.

JOHN xiv. 6.

I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me.

NOW we go on: Chriſt, as he is the way from ſin, ſo he is the way from wrath; and, indeed, muſt be the way from wrath, when he is the way from ſin: wrath is but the wages of ſin, the effect wrought by ſin. Take away the cauſe, and the effect dies; deſtroy the root, and the branches wither of themſelves. Man's ſin is the root of wrath; when ſin is deſtroyed and aboliſhed, wrath muſt needs ſink and periſh. Chriſt is ſo the way from wrath, that all that receive him are wholly diſcharged, both from God's affection of wrath, (as I may ſo ſpeak) and from the effects of that affection of his. Wrath is conſidered in theſe two reſpects: *firſt*, Simply, as the diſpleaſure of God itſelf; the offence that God takes: *ſecondly*, In the fruits of this offence, that he manifeſts in the expreſſion of his indignation and diſpleaſure. Chriſt is the way, the only way, the effectual and infalli-

ble way, from all this wrath, to all that do receive him.

Firſt, From the affection itſelf of wrath. Let me tell you, beloved, (I would to God you could receive it according to the manifeſt evidence of ſcripture) God no longer ſtands offended nor diſpleaſed; though a believer, after he be a believer, ſins often [z], yet, I ſay, God no longer ſtands offended and diſpleaſed with him, when he has once received Chriſt; and unto them, ſaith God, *Fury is not in me*, Iſa. xxvii. 4. And in *Iſaiah* liii. 5. (among many other notable expreſſions of God's being well-pleaſed towards poor ſinners through Chriſt) he ſaith, *He was wounded for their tranſgreſſions*; you have this admirable expreſſion of the effect of his wounding, *He ſhall ſee of the travail of his ſoul, and ſhall be ſatisfied:* ſatisfied, here, is as much as pacified; they are all one. The travail of the ſoul of Chriſt makes God ſuch amends for the ſinfulneſs of believers, that he can no

[z] As every believer does, and yet God is not offended with him; the meaning is not, that his ſin is not offenſive to God; it is in its own nature, being contrary to the nature of God, as the Dr. in a following page obſerves, and where he alſo diſtinguiſhes between God's being offended with the ſins of believers, and with their perſons; and it is in this latter ſenſe he is to be underſtood here: for God loves them with an everlaſting love, and has no fury in him towards them; and beſides, all their ſins are fully ſatisfied for by Chriſt, who thereby has took away all cauſe of offence, that is, ſin. So the very learned *Witſius*, referring to this paſſage of the Dr's, obſerves, he is to be underſtood, *reſpectu pleniſſimæ illius reconciliationis quam impetravit Chriſtu*, in reſpect of that moſt full reconciliation which Chriſt has obtained, and which is adjudged to believers in juſtification. *Animadv. Irenicæ*, c. 12, ſect. 7.

no longer ſtand offended and diſpleaſed with them. If God doth remain offended with them, there is yet ſome of their ſinfulneſs remaining to be taken away, that this offence alſo may be taken away. All their ſins muſt be taken away from them, and all offences will be removed from them. But, except God will be offended, where there is no cauſe to be offended, (which is blaſphemy to ſpeak) he will not be offended with believers. For I ſay he hath no cauſe to be offended with a believer, becauſe he doth not find the ſin of the believer to be the believer's own ſin, but he finds it the ſin of Chriſt [h]; *He was made ſin for us*; *God laid the iniquities of us all upon him*: *The blood of Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin*: *He bare our ſins in his own body on the tree*; and if he bear our ſins, he muſt bear the diſpleaſure for them; nay, he did bear the diſpleaſure, the indignation of the Lord; and if he did bear the indignation of the Lord, either he did bear all, or but part: if he did not bear all the indignation of the Lord, then he doth not *ſave to the uttermoſt thoſe that come to God by him*; as he is ſaid to do, *Heb.* vii. 25. I ſay, not to the uttermoſt, becauſe here is ſome offence, ſome indignation, left behind; and for lack of taking

[h] Being imputed to him, and atoned for by him; and ſo the offence by it, to the juſtice of God, is ceaſed, having had ample ſatisfaction. So the above-mentioned judicious profeſſor *Witſius* gives the ſenſe of the paſſage. "God is not "offended without a cauſe; there is no cauſe of offence "but ſin; Chriſt has borne and taken away all the ſins of "believers, and the moſt juſt offence of God for them; and "not only ſome part of the offence, but all, all entirely, "therefore there remains none that lies upon believers; to "theſe God ſays, *Fury is not in me*, *Iſai.* xxvii. 4." *Ibid.*

taking this indignation upon himſelf, it falls upon believers. So that, either you muſt ſay, Chriſt is an imperfect Saviour, and hath left ſome ſcattering of wrath behind, that will light upon the head of the believer; or elſe you will ſay, he is a perfect Saviour, and takes away all diſpleaſure of God; then there remains none of it upon the perſon of a believer. Beloved, for my part, I underſtand not what clouds are in the mind and judgment of other men; to me it ſeems, there is no truth more abundantly cleared, in all the ſcriptures, than this one truth of the transferring of our ſins, and ſo the offence for them, wholly upon the back of Chriſt; and thus a poor ſoul hath reſt from the indignation of God, as Chriſt takes the burthen off from his ſhoulders. There is a twofold burthen; *firſt*, In ſin itſelf; and, *ſecondly*, In the indignation of God for it. Who can bear this indignation of his? Chriſt alone, and he hath borne it.

Yea, but you will ſay, Is not God offended at the ſins of believers, when they do commit them? Hath Chriſt taken away the offence againſt ſin by his death?

I anſwer, No; therefore do not miſtake yourſelf; there may be eaſily a miſtake for lack of ſerious pondering the words I deliver. I have not ſaid, God is not offended with the ſins that believers commit; but God ſtands not offended with the perſons of believers, for the ſins committed by them. He hath that everlaſting indignation againſt ſin as ever. And as there is the

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ſame contrariety in ſin againſt his nature, ſo there is the ſame contrariety in God's nature unto ſin. All contrarieties have a mutual contrariety againſt each other; as water is contrary to fire, ſo fire is contrary to water; as ſin is contrary to the nature of God, ſo the nature of God is contrary to ſin: there is an abhorrency of God to that ſinfulneſs, but not an offence in God to the perſon that commits that ſin: becauſe the offence of God for that ſin hath ſpent itſelf upon the perſon of Chriſt; and, by having ſo ſpent itſelf, there remains none of it to light upon the perſon of a believer; Chriſt having borne all this offence for ſin. And therefore as I ſaid before, either grant Chriſt hath ſatisfied the father, that he is pleaſed in his beloved ſon, according to Chriſt's own ſpeech; either grant this, or ſay, Chriſt hath not done all. In *Matt.* iii. is heard a voice from heaven, at the baptizing of Chriſt, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* He doth not ſay, *with whom* I am well pleaſed, but *in whom* I am well pleaſed; that is, in whom I am well pleaſed with you. Though in our natures, and in the ſinfulneſs of them, there is matter of diſpleaſure, yet in Chriſt, for all this, God is well pleaſed with us. And yet there is none of God's indignation againſt ſin loſt in all this, becauſe he is not offended at all with the believer: for he hath ſatisfied his own offence in his ſon more fully than he would have ſatisfied it in our own perſons; we muſt have been everlaſtingly ſuffering, before God would have been fully ſatisfied. Now, therefore,

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as the payment of a great ſum all at one payment, and at a day, is a better payment, than by a penny a year, 'till a thouſand years be out: mark what I ſay; ſo Chriſt's ſatisfying the Father at once, by one ſacrifice of himſelf, is a better ſatisfying of him, than if we ſhould have been infinite days in paying that which his juſtice requires, and his indignation to ſin doth expect. So here is no derogation to the loathſome nature of ſin, and the purity of God, and the great offence God takes at ſin; but only here is the tranſaction of it from the perſon of a believer, to the perſon of Chriſt himſelf, that willingly took this upon him: and not only did he take it upon him, but it was according to the determinate counſel and purpoſe of God that he ſhould do it; nay, the pleaſure of God, *It pleaſed the Father to bruiſe him*, Iſa. liii. 10. So much briefly for the affection of wrath, and how much Chriſt is a way to take away that affection of God's wrath; that is, wrath ſimple, as it is an offence from him to a believer.

Secondly, Chriſt is a way to take away the effect of God's diſpleaſure; Chriſt is the only way to take it away. *Shall I give the fruit of my body*, ſaith the prophet *Micah*, vi. 7. *for the ſin of my ſoul? thouſands of rams, or ten thouſand rivers of oil?* No, alas! this will not buy out the penance of one ſin, when he hath ſinned; it is all too mean a price: there muſt be a better to take away that wrath; that is, the heavy puniſhment of God from a believer. I ſay a better price than this; not a dearer price to us poor men, but yet a more dear

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and acceptable price unto God; a price, in its nature, infinite and invaluable; but, of this price, not a farthing goes out of our purſe; there is the greatneſs. Chriſt is a way to take away all wrath, in reſpect of the heavy hand of God, which is the fruit of man's ſin.

In brief, beloved, the ſum plainly is this, Chriſt is ſo the way from wrath, that God doth never puniſh any believer, after he is a believer, for ſin; I ſay, God doth not puniſh for ſin[i]. This ſeems to be a harſh propoſition to many; but give me leave to clear what I ſay; and ſo, according to the clear evidence of truth, reject or receive what I deliver to you. In *Iſaiah* liii. 5. a chapter of moſt admirable excellency to ſet forth the wonderful and incomprehenſible benefit of Chriſt: obſerve it, *He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions*; mark the puniſhment; *He was bruiſed for our iniquities*; *the chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him*; *and by his ſtripes we are healed.* Now, beloved, I will aſk but this queſtion; Are the wounds of Chriſt only part of our puniſhment? or, are they the whole of our puniſhment? The bruiſings of Chriſt, were they to be part of the puniſhment our ſins deſerved?

[i] The reaſon is, becauſe the whole puniſhment, due to his ſins, has been borne by Chriſt, his ſurety, for him; and to inflict puniſhment twice for the ſame ſins, once upon the ſurety, and again upon the believer, is contrary to the juſtice of God, as well as derogatory to the ſatisfaction of Chriſt; for either he has bore the whole of puniſhment, or only a part; if the whole, which is the truth, then none can be laid upon the believer; but, if only a part, Chriſt's ſatisfaction is not compleat, and then the believer muſt be a co-bearer and co-ſaviour with Chriſt, as the Dr. obſerves; neither of which ought to be ſaid.

deſerved? If they were but part, we muſt bear the reſt ourſelves; but then, we muſt be co-ſaviours with Chriſt, co-bearers of indignation and wrath. *Iſa.* lxiii. 5. *He hath trodden the wine-preſs alone,* ſaith the text; *He looked for ſome that might help, and wondered, and there was none.* No creature in the world was able to be a helper with him.

I ſpeak of believers only; they do not bear one laſh of that deſerved wrath, that is poured out for ſin, not one laſh or ſtroke; Chriſt trod it alone himſelf. Yea, but you will ſay unto me, Doth not God afflict his children and believers? All the world ſeeth and knoweth he doth; therefore, why ſpeak you againſt this? Beloved, give me leave to aſk you, Is there not a great deal of difference between God's afflicting believers, and puniſhing believers for ſin?

Yea, but are not the afflictions of believers for ſin?

I anſwer, No: afflictions are unto believers *from* ſin, but not *for* ſin [k]. What is the meaning of that, you will ſay? God, in afflicting believers, doth not intend to puniſh them, as now laying on them the deſert of their ſin, for that is laid upon Chriſt; but he doth afflict them in part to be a help to preſerve them from ſin: I ſay, All afflictions to believers are to keep them from ſin, rather than

[k] That is, they are not puniſhments for ſins, or are in a way of vindictive wrath for them; but they are in love, and for the good of God's people; they are fatherly chaſtiſements for ſins, in order to take them away, or purge them from them, or prevent them, or preſerve from them, as the Dr. afterwards explains himſelf.

than puniſhment unto them for ſin. Yet, ſome will ſay, No men in the world are afflicted, but their afflictions are for ſin; I anſwer, Yea, there are that have been. The diſciples put a queſtion to Chriſt, when the man was born blind; *Whether did this man ſin, or his parents, that he was born blind?* Saith Chriſt to them, *Neither he nor his parents:* not that neither of them had ſinned, but that neither he, nor his parents had any ſin, as a cauſe of that affliction or trial upon him; but that the power of God might be ſeen in him. So God, afflicting a believer, hath no reſpect unto ſin, as if he did afflict for ſin. For my own part, I cannot ſee how a man can ſay, Chriſt bore all the puniſhment of ſin, if we bear any of it ourſelves. And, if Chriſt did not bear it all, I cannot ſee how Chriſt can be a ſufficient Saviour, without ſome other to help him out, in that which he himſelf did not bear. I ſpeak all this, beloved, the rather becauſe when poor believers are croſſed and afflicted in any kind, they are preſently ready to ſuſpect, God hath caſt them off for their ſins, and is angry with them for ſinning againſt him. I ſay, in reſpect of ſin he hath committed, which he thus ſuſpects, there is not the leaſt drop of the diſpleaſure of God, nor the fruit of ſuch diſpleaſure comes near him; *But every ſon whom I love, I rebuke and chaſten*, ſaith the Lord. God ſeeth that afflictions will purge, therefore he gives them. The father gives not his child a purge to make him ſick, but to take away ſome bad humours that made him ſick, and for the prevention of diſeaſes,

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or for the removal of ſome diſeaſe; that is the father's end in purging the child. And this is the end why God afflicts his people; not for their ſins, but to take them away; that is, to prevent the haſtineſs and inconſiderateneſs of a believer, that he may not be ſo raſh, running head-ſtrong in his own ways, but may be the more conſiderate for the time to come. It is moſt certainly true, beloved, that as ſoon as ever a perſon is a believer, he is ſo ingratiated into God, and with him, that there is nothing in the world from that inſtant, unto a believer, but mercy. God managing his mercy in his own way for the beſt to his; ſometimes by the rod, as well as by ſweet-meats; but ſtill he runs in a way of mercy. *All things ſhall work together for good*; this is God's way to believers. And if this could but be received of them; and that even then, when they are as gold caſt into the fire, that God, all that time they are in the fire, as the prophet *Malachi* ſpeaks, ſits *as a refiner*; then they would be more quiet in the expectation of that purity, in which they ſhall come forth, when the time of their coming forth is: when you ſee the refiner caſt his gold into the furnace, do you think he is angry with the gold, and means to caſt it away? No, he ſits as a refiner; that is, he ſtands warily over the fire, and over the gold, and looks unto it, that not one grain be loſt; and when the droſs is ſevered, he will out with it preſently, it ſhall be no longer there. Even ſo Chriſt ſits as a refiner; when once his gold ſhall have

have its droſs ſevered, then he takes out his gold, and it becomes as gold ſeven times purified in the fire. But ſtill, I ſay, as a fruit of wrath, God doth never puniſh, or afflict, or chaſtiſe; (which word you may rather uſe, becauſe it is the ordinary phraſe of the goſpel) *Every ſon I love, I rebuke and chaſten.*

In brief, Chriſt is the way from wrath, not only in reſpect of the preſent, but alſo in reſpect of the future; I mean a way from everlaſting damnation. Give me a believer that hath ſet his footing truly in Chriſt, and he blaſphemes Chriſt that dares ſerve a writ of damnation upon that perſon. Suppoſe a believer be overtaken in a groſs ſin, it is a deſperate thing, in any man, ſo much as to ſerve a writ of damnation upon this believer; it is abſolutely to fruſtrate, and make void the mediatorſhip and ſaviourſhip of Chriſt, to ſay, any believer (though he be fallen by infirmity) is in the eſtate of damnation. And I ſay unto thee, thyſelf, whoever thou art, thou that art ready to charge damnation upon thyſelf, when thou art overtaken, thou doeſt the greateſt injury to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt that can be: for in it thou directly overthroweſt the fulneſs of the grace of Chriſt, and the fulneſs of the ſatisfaction of Chriſt to the Father. Art thou a believer, and yet art thou in danger of damnation? Wherefore hath Chriſt ſuffered? Hath he died in vain? If he hath not died in vain, but hath borne thy damnation, how ſhall he pour forth this dam-

nation upon thee again, unleſs he be unjuſt? which is blaſphemy to ſpeak.

But you will ſay, this is preſumption; then may a man go on, and do what he liſt, there is no fear of damnation: this is the way to take the bridle from men, and make them kick up their heels, as the wild aſſes upon the mountains.

I anſwer, it is true, were a man to be guided by himſelf, and to order his own way, according to the pleaſure of his own will: but, beloved, you muſt know, that the ſame Chriſt that hath borne the wrath of the father, and the effects thereof, doth free poor ſinners from damnation; the ſame Chriſt takes as ſtrict an order, to reſtrain and keep in the ſpirits of a man, as to ſave that man. Beloved, although a wild aſs, being looſe, runs at random, yet this aſs may be taken, and ſo tamed, that he may be ſet as looſe as he was before; yet he will not run unrulily as he did before, by virtue of his being tamed. It is true, our natures themſelves are mad, and, if they had the reins, would run wild; but you muſt know, that Chriſt breaks this wildneſs, and then he dare let a believer looſe to that, in reſpect of which, an unbeliever, a wicked man, would take advantage to ſin, *Jer.* xxxi. 18, 19. Here the Lord diſcourſes of *Ephraim*; *I have heard* Ephraim *bemoaning of himſelf*, thus; *Thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was chaſtiſed as a bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke:* here is a wild bull, an unruly creature. You may be ſure *Ephraim* was thus: God hampers *Ephraim* well enough for all this;

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Convert thou me, and I ſhall be converted; ſo after I was converted, I was aſhamed, I ſmote upon my thigh, I was aſhamed and confounded within myſelf. Mark you, I pray, now let *Ephraim* looſe; alas! *Ephraim* is aſhamed. *Ephraim* would bluſh to look after that which he was mad after before; he is confounded within himſelf; he cannot tell which way to ſtir now, as before. Chriſt doth break the ſpirits of him; ſo that there is not now that licentiouſneſs in him, through the power of Chriſt, which was naturally in him, till the power of Chriſt came upon him.

Why muſt not hell and damnation be a bridle to keep men in, will you ſay?

I anſwer, mark what the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Pſ.* cx. 3. *Thy people ſhall be a willing people.* Here you ſee how tame the people of Chriſt are. Thy people are a willing people. How ſo? By fear of damnation? No ſuch thing, *But in the day of thy power, and in the beauty of holineſs*, they ſhall be a willing people. *Firſt*, the power of Chriſt comes over a perſon, that frames his ſpirit to a willingneſs and aptneſs; then comes the beauty of holineſs, that wins, perſwades, allures, and draws them to willingneſs; and where there is a willing ſpirit to walk with Chriſt, there is no danger of taking liberty. The philoſophers obſerve a rule, that the will is not compelled; a man cannot conſtrain his will. Let the will of a perſon but be to the pleaſure of Chriſt, nothing can conſtrain him to go beyond Chriſt; he may haply be over-reached, and be over-taken, but he will never

break looſe; he will never run away, though the gate ſtands open on every ſide. The graſs and paſture are ſo ſweet that Chriſt hath put a believer into, that though there be no bounds to keep in ſuch a ſoul, yet it will never go out of this fat paſture, to feed in a barren common. Therefore, in anſwer to the objectors, who naturally think there is a way open to ſuch licentiouſneſs, by taking away all wrath from a believer, and that therefore he will break into all manner of exceſs, I tell you, the power of Chriſt reſtrains him. Thus I have diſpatched the ſecond thing, from whence Chriſt is the way; he is the way from ſin and wrath; wrath in the affection, wrath in the effects of it.

I come now, in the next place, to conſider, how Chriſt is the way, not only from ſin and wrath, but the way, and the only way, to grace and glory. Grace, in ſcripture, admits of a double acceptation, proper and improper. We uſually take grace for that which is improperly grace; for we commonly call grace thoſe divine qualities and virtues, and holy diſpoſitions and actions, wherewith we are poſſeſſed, by which we do improve and employ ourſelves in the world. This we uſually call grace; and, in ſome ſenſe, it is grace: but that which is moſt properly grace, is nothing elſe but merely favour and bounty, and loving-kindneſs itſelf; and ſo, conſequently, all ſanctification is not ſo properly grace itſelf, as the fruit of grace; God firſt caſts his favour and loving-kindneſs upon a perſon, then

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out of his favour flow the ſeveral fruits of his loving-kindneſs; and the fruits are thoſe fruits of the ſpirit, frequently mentioned by the apoſtle. Now Chriſt is a way to grace in both theſe reſpects; Chriſt is a way to favour and loving-kindneſs in God; Chriſt is a way to all fruits or graces, as you call them.

He is a way to loving-kindneſs itſelf, and the favour of God: this loving-kindneſs and favour of God, conſiſt in theſe branches; *firſt*, in a willing reconciliation of God, unto an alienated creature. A perſon is then ſaid to be received into grace, when he hath been caſt off, and forbidden to come near; as when princes caſt men out of their favour, they confine them, and remove them from them, that they ſhall not be near the court: now when princes are pleaſed to caſt a freſh aſpect upon thoſe perſons again, and ſo call them to court, and to be friends with them, this is properly grace. So, beloved, after God ſeems to have caſt off a perſon, and to put him far off from himſelf, and to remove him out of his ſight, to confine him from coming near him; when he will return to him again, and will ſhew him the light of his countenance, that he did formerly hide, this is properly favour. The apoſtle, you ſhall find, doth expreſsly mention this reconciliation of God, and aſcribes this grace meerly unto Chriſt alone, *Ye who were ſometimes afar off*, mark but the expreſſion, *hath he made nigh by the blood of Chriſt*; here you ſee the ingratiating reconciliation by the blood of Chriſt. *God was*

in Chriſt, ſaith the apoſtle, *reconciling the world unto himſelf; not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them; in Chriſt reconciling*; and therefore, *Chriſt is the mediator of a better covenant*, (as the apoſtle expreſſeth, *Heb.* viii.) Nay the apoſtle tells us expreſsly, he is the only mediator, and there is no other to reconcile men to God, but Chriſt alone; *There is but one mediator between God and man, the man Chriſt Jeſus* So, we ſee plainly, to be at peace with God, there muſt be only the Lord Jeſus Chriſt that muſt make peace; he himſelf is the way. I remember a paſſage in *Job*, when there ſeemed to be a variance between God and him; firſt *Job* was at a pitiful ſtand, *I cannot anſwer him*, ſaith *Job*, ſpeaking of God; why ſo? *There is no days-man that may come in between us, that might lay his hand upon us both:* as much as to ſay, there is no hope of agreement with God, till another interpoſe himſelf, and be a days-man; that is, hath power over us both. Such effectual umpires between men are indifferent, and have both parties in difference in their power, to command the one, and the other; to command the creditor to yield, and to prevail with the debtor to pay as much as he is able; and this umpire is Chriſt alone.

There are many other expreſſions of God's grace, of his loving-kindneſs and favour, and it is plain, throughout the whole ſcripture, that Chriſt is the only way to all. As, to that adoption that the apoſtle ſpeaks of, (when he breaks out into admiration) ſaying, *Behold, what manner of love*

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the Father hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the ſons of God! Is it a ſmall matter to you (ſaith *David*, ſpeaking to ſome of the ſervants of *Saul*, perſwading him to marry the king's daughter) *ſeemeth it to you a light thing to be a king's ſon-in-law?* So ſay I to you, *Is it a ſmall matter to you to be the ſons of God?* Oh! great love! But this great grace and favour is only by Jeſus Chriſt. In *Gal.* iv. 4, 5. it is plainly Chriſt that brings this grace of adoption, to make us ſons; *In the fulneſs of time, God ſent his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that are under the law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons.* Here you ſee, all that Chriſt doth, is to this end; that at length, through that he hath done, we might receive the adoption of ſons. As Chriſt is a way unto the pure grace, and meer favour, and loving-kindneſs of God; ſo alſo unto all the fruits of grace, all the manifeſtations of it in the expreſſion of God's loving-kindneſs in the fruits of the Spirit. To give you ſome inſtances:

The *firſt* of all theſe kinds of the grace of God, that he doth ever beſtow upon a perſon, is, The opening his eyes to ſee himſelf filthy, and to ſee what he is: here begins a cloſing with Chriſt, to ſee a need of him, and to ſee the uſefulneſs of him being received. Now mark this great buſineſs, of the opening of the eyes of a perſon, and you ſhall ſee he is a way unto it, *Iſa.* xlii. 6. there the Father doth treat with Chriſt, and in his treaty he ſpeaks thus to him, *I will give thee for a covenant to the people, to open the blind eyes.* You ſee this,

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it is Chriſt that muſt open the blind eyes of men. Beloved, men are miſtaken that think that the law makes them to ſee their own vileneſs; for a gracious ſight of our vileneſs, is the only work of Chriſt. The law is a looking-glaſs able to repreſent the filthineſs of a perſon; but the law gives not eyes to ſee that filthineſs: bring a looking-glaſs, and ſet it before a blind man, he ſeeth no more ſpots in his face, than if he had none at all; though the glaſs be a good glaſs, yet the glaſs cannot give eyes; yet, if he had eyes, the glaſs might repreſent his filthineſs. The apoſtle *James* compares the law to a looking-glaſs, and that is all the law can do, to have a faculty to repreſent; but it doth not give a faculty to ſee what it doth repreſent: it is Chriſt alone that doth open the eyes of men, to behold their own vileneſs and filthineſs; and when Chriſt will open the eyes, then a man ſhall ſee himſelf what he is.

Secondly, Repentance is a great grace; yet you ſhall find, beloved, in *Acts* v. 31. that it is meerly the work of Chriſt to give repentance unto men; *God hath exalted him to be a prince and a ſaviour, to give repentance unto* Iſrael. It is Chriſt that grants repentance unto life; and if ever you will repent, with a kind repentance, either you muſt fetch it from Chriſt, he muſt be the way, or you muſt go without it.

Faith is a grace of graces, the root of all graces to believers; and this is properly Chriſt, and none but Chriſt, that works faith in a believer; the apoſtle ſpeaks this expreſsly, *Heb.* xii. 2. *Look-*

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ing to Jeſus, the author and finiſher of our faith. He is the author, it is he that begets it.

Thirdly, Conſider the whole ſpiritual life; Chriſt is the only way to all ſpiritual life whatſoever. *I live*, (ſaith *Paul*) *yet not I, but Chriſt lives in me; and the life that I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God.* There is no life, but as Chriſt lives in men. Whence is the natural life of man? It is from the ſoul; the ſoul once ſeparated from the body, is dead; ſo long as the ſoul is united to the body, the man is alive; Chriſt is the life of every believing ſoul; Chriſt is he that frames and gives life to men. *Eph.* ii. 1. *Ye that were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, hath he quickened*; he it is that quickens men when they are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins. And in *John* v. 25. you have this admirable expreſſion, *That the time is coming, and now is, that the dead ſhall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear his voice ſhall live.* There is no life but by Chriſt alone; he is the way to all ſpiritual life whatſoever. So in brief, beloved, there is not a ſcrap (as you may ſay) pertaining to a Chriſtian, but it comes from Chriſt alone.

Fourthly, God hath therefore filled Chriſt full of all things, that we might fetch all from him. The apoſtle tells us expreſsly, *It pleaſed the Father that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell.* St. *John*, in the 1ſt chapter of his goſpel, tells us to what purpoſe he was *full of grace and truth*, ſaying, *And of his fulneſs we all receive, and grace for grace.* The Pſalmiſt, (*Pſal.* lxviii. 18.) hath this expreſ-

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ſion, *Thou haſt received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, that the Lord God may dwell among them.* The apoſtle, quoting that text, turns the words thus; *Thou haſt given gifts to men:* it is as much as to ſay, that God bequeathed as much to Chriſt, as ſhall ſerve for his body; and this he diſtributes to the body, according to the proportionable need of it. The head is firſt the fountain, and hath all animal ſpirits planted in it; then doth it from itſelf derive all thoſe animal ſpirits to every part, from whence all have their ſeveral motions. So that, I ſay, the ſupply of all the believer's wants concerning grace, be it in matters of mortification of ſin, be it in the performance of duties of piety, mercy, and juſtice, or any other whatſoever, the ſupply of all muſt come from Chriſt alone, as he ſpeaks himſelf, *Rev.* i. 8. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end* of all things. *All my ſprings* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* lxxxvii 7.) *are in thee.* He ſpeaks of Chriſt in the name of God, as if God ſpake to Chriſt his ſon; *All my ſprings are in thee:* therefore you ſhall find God always dealing with men, as *Pharoah* dealt in *Ægypt* with his own people; they came complaining of their wants to *Pharoah: Go to* Joſeph, *(ſaith* Pharoah) *hear what he ſaith*; he turns all over to *Joſeph.* Thus doth God deal with men: *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed, hear ye him,* ſaith God the Father: therefore, Chriſt ſaith, *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:* ſo that Chriſt is judge alone; as Chriſt will diſpoſe of all things, ſo his Father ſets to his ſeal,

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and under writes his hand, and never examines what Chriſt doth; but every deed that is ſigned by Chriſt, the Father without any more ado ſeals it, and manages all things by the hand of Chriſt: therefore, Chriſt ſaith, in the laſt of *Matthew*, *All power is given unto me, both in heaven and in earth.* The Father made all over to him, every thing. The truth is, beloved, the Godhead is abſolutely a being of itſelf, but this Godhead was pleaſed to unite the humanity to itſelf, and the Godhead having the humanity united to it, is one perſon[1]. Thus it pleaſed Chriſt to manage all things in the world, not in the Godhead alone, but as the Godhead hath the manhood united to it. You muſt not conceive, when God makes over the managing of things to Chriſt, that he ſits ſtill. But the Godhead hath now the manhood united to itſelf; ſo it is Chriſt, God and man, that works together; and, by this kind of way, there is nearer and better acceſs for us unto God; becauſe here is an humanity that is of ſome relation unto us, and ſo of near acquaintance with us. The Godhead, in its ſimple nature, is of too remote a diſtance for us to come near.

Fifthly, Moreover, he is not only a way to grace, but the encreaſing of it is in Chriſt. The apoſtle (*Col.* ii. 10.) tells us, that *we are compleat in him, who is the head of the body, the head of all principalities*; not only that we have ſubſtance and being, but that we are compleat in him; and, in the

[1] That is, the Godhead, as ſubſiſting in the Son of God, is a perſon of itſelf, and taking the humanity into union with it, both became one perſon.

the latter end of the chapter, the apoſtle follows the alluſion of the head and body, and ſaith, that the *parts having nouriſhment miniſtred by joints, increaſe with the increaſe of God.* When the parts are united to the head, and the head through the veins and nerves conveys nouriſhment to thoſe parts, then the parts not only live, but increaſe with the increaſe of God. The apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* ii. 4. ſaith, *To whom coming as to a Living-Stone,* (ſpeaking to believers) *you as lively ſtones are built up a ſpiritual houſe*; he doth not ſay, ſtones that have life, but *lively ſtones*; they have more than bare life; nay, further, *as lively ſtones are built up* together. There is a growing up by the power of Chriſt, in coming to the *Living-Stone*, as the apoſtle doth there call him.

And that is not all neither; we have not only growth by the grace of Chriſt, but reſtoration and recovery in caſe of relapſe. Suppoſe a believer fall, the ſame Chriſt that gave him life, and ſet him upon his legs, muſt raiſe him up again when he is down; *Though I fall, yet ſhall I not be caſt down*, ſaith he; that is, I ſhall not be left, but ſhall be raiſed again: *The ranſomed of the Lord* (Iſa. xxxv. 10.) *ſhall return unto* Sion, *they ſhall rejoyce with everlaſting joy upon their heads; they ſhall obtain joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and ſighing ſhall fly away.* They ſhall return to *Sion*; they were of *Sion* before: a man is not ſaid to return, except he were in the place before, and ſo is coming again; ſo the ranſomed of the Lord ſhall return to *Sion*. How? they are the ranſomed of

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the Lord; it is the ranſom of Chriſt that brings them back from bondage to their *Sion* again; and when he brings them back, he brings them back *with everlaſting joy upon their heads*; *they obtain joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and ſighing fly away.*

Thus I have endeavoured to declare the main thing, in what kind Chriſt is a way from a ſtate of ſin and wrath, to a ſtate of grace.

I ſhould have further conſidered what kind of way Chriſt is, and upon what grounds Chriſt is become ſuch a way as he is; but I conſider the ſeaſon; I ſhall not therefore treſpaſs upon your patience, though my fingers itch to be dealing in that which remains. There is abundance of excellency behind; Chriſt he is a free way; Chriſt is a near way; Chriſt is a way of quick riddance of all buſineſs, you have to do in the way; Chriſt is a firm way, there is no fear of ſinking; Chriſt is a ſatisfying and pleaſant way; *All thy ways are pleaſantneſs*; Chriſt is a ſafe way, there is a continual guard and conduct in that way; Chriſt is an eaſy way to hit; *Way-faring men, though fools,* (ſaith *Iſaiah*) *ſhall not err therein*; Chriſt is a ſpacious way, *Thou haſt ſet my feet in a large room,* ſaith *David.* Now all this is founded upon the good pleaſure of God; he will have Chriſt to be the way: it is founded upon the intereſt that Chriſt hath in God; it is founded upon the purchaſe of Chriſt, that hath bought this for man; it is likewiſe founded upon the conqueſt of Chriſt, as he makes his own way, and beats all off that keeps thee from finding this way; it is founded, *laſtly,* upon

upon his bowels to the ſons of men, that can never paſs over the gulph, 'till he hath made himſelf a bridge for them. Theſe things I ſhould have ſhewed you by ſetting forth the excellency of this way. But of theſe hereafter.

SERMON III.

Chriſt the Only Way.

JOHN xiv. 6.

I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me.

I Have a word or two to ſpeak more fully, if poſſible it may be, to ſatisfy ſuch as are not fully reſolved in the things I formerly delivered. Chriſt, I ſaid, is the way from wrath, from the wrath of the Father; from wrath in its affection, (as I may ſo ſpeak;) from wrath in the fruits of this affection of wrath. I delivered this poſition indeed: "The puniſhment, or the rod "of God, or rather chaſtiſement, is not *for* ſin, "but *from* ſin." Some ſtumble at the expreſſion, peradventure through miſtake. In brief, therefore,

fore, beloved, to clear both myſelf and your judgments, if it be poſſible; when I ſay that believers are not afflicted for ſin, I mean thus; God, when he afflicts a believer, he hath not an eye to the deſert of his ſin, and thereupon doth lay part of this deſert upon his back; for Chriſt hath borne the whole deſert of ſin upon his own back. Whatſoever deſert of ſin the believer doth bear, Chriſt did not bear it, or elſe God takes ſatisfaction twice for one thing. Mark it well, I pray beloved, if the Lord will ſcourge a believer, as now pouring out upon him what his tranſgreſſions hath deſerved, wherefore did Chriſt die? Chriſt died to ſatisfy for the fault of ſin; and, in his death, God was actually ſatisfied, as you ſhall find it in *Iſa.* liii. *He beheld the travail of his ſoul, and he was ſatisfied with it.* With what was he ſatisfied? He was ſatisfied with *the travail of his ſoul*; with the burthen his ſoul bare, with the puniſhment of ſin that was upon him. If God was ſatisfied with the *travail of his ſoul*, how can God come to exact a new ſatisfaction by pouring out his wrath for ſin upon believers? To be ſatisfied, and to aſk more, is a contradiction; either he was not ſatisfied, or, being ſatisfied, he could aſk no more. In brief, therefore, beloved, conſider thus much, there is not the leaſt action, or rather intention of any revenge, for a ſin committed, when the Lord in any kind afflicts his people: all the revenge, that ſin deſerves, Chriſt hath taken away and hath borne it upon his own back; and, therefore, he is ſaid to *ſave to the uttermoſt* (*Heb.* vii. 25.) *them that*

that come to God by him. He ſaves to the utmoſt, ſaith the apoſtle: he hath not left a dram, nor a jot behind, not ſo much as the leaſt ſcatterings of wrath to light upon the head of a believer, for whoſe ſake he bare the indignation of the Lord. Whereupon the very nature of affliction in general is altered and changed; as death in particular: it was the wages of ſin at firſt; it is become the bed of reſt now; *They ſhall reſt in their beds, each in his uprightneſs*, ſaith the prophet. Afflictions were the rod of God's anger; they are now the gentle purges of a tender father. God heretofore afflicted for ſin, now God afflicts men from ſin; *This is all the fruit*, ſaith the prophet, *to take away his ſin:* not to take away the preſent ſin, as if affliction did make an end, and ſo blot out tranſgreſſion; this doth directly ſtrike at the heart of Chriſt himſelf [m]. But *this is all the fruit to take away ſin*, that is, to break off ſin, to prevent ſin. *Before I was afflicted* (ſaith *David*) *I went aſtray, but now have I learned to keep thy law:* therefore (ſaith he) *It is good for me that I have been afflicted*; in this regard, becauſe of prevention.

If you will but carry it clearly without carping, or a ſpirit that ſeeks contention and quarrelling, you never need to ſtumble at ſuch a poſition as this; for afflictions are the ſmiles of God, as gracious as the choiceſt embraces. God never

[m] For it is Chriſt's work to take every preſent ſin from off the conſcience of the believer, by the application of his blood and ſacrifice; hence he is ſaid to be *the Lamb of God that taketh away*, that continues to take away, *the ſins of the world.*

never manifeſts a loving ſtroking of a ſoul, more than he doth, when he afflicts it, to make his love appear in theſe afflictions. And the truth is, as Chriſt has purchaſed reſt and peace for believers, ſo he hath likewiſe purchaſed afflictions for them too; the wiſdom of God ſeeing afflictions as uſeful as dandlings themſelves: but ſtill, I ſay, this remains firm, that Chriſt is a way from all wrath whatſoever, as it is the manifeſtation of God's diſpleaſure unto the creature's ſinning; and thereby pouring out the deſert of this ſinfulneſs, or the fruit of the deſert of this ſinfulneſs, upon them. Chriſt is a way to the ſtate of grace; grace in reſpect of favour, grace in reſpect of the fruits thereof; and this we have diſpatched.

The next thing conſiderable is, *What kind of way Chriſt is to thoſe that come to the Father by him?* I ſhall ſpeak as briefly as poſſible I may. Take notice, in general, that the Lord hath laid out Chriſt as a way, with all the poſſible conveniences that may either win a people into this way, or ſatisfy and refreſh a people that are in this way; he hath ſo furniſhed Chriſt, the way, with all poſſible accommodations, as there cannot be deviſed what the heart of man himſelf can deſire, but he ſhall find it in this way, Chriſt: ſo that all I ſhall ſpeak of this ſubject is, that as it may give abundance of light, ſo you may apply it all along, by way of motive to ſtir you up, to quicken you to ſet footing into this way, in reſpect of thoſe ſeveral conveniences that do accompany it.

In the *firſt* place, There is this great and ineffable excellency and accommodation in Chriſt, the way, that he is a free way for all comers to enter into, without any cauſe of fear, that they ſhall treſpaſs by entering: he is a free way, I ſay; a way that coſts nothing; a way barred up to no perſon whatſoever; a way whoſe gates are caſt off from the hinges; nay, rather, a way that hath no gates at all unto it; a cheap way to us; a coſtly way indeed unto the Father, and to Chriſt too. O beloved! a man might ſtudy a while to find out, whether there be more precioufneſs in Chriſt himſelf, as he is our way, or in the fitting of Chriſt to be our way. The perſon of Chriſt is invaluable, there is nothing to be compared with him: but conſidering him as our way to ſalvation, whether there be more precioufneſs in that, or in the fitting of him for it, is not ſo eaſy to determine. *Ye are bought with a price* (ſaith the apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* i. 18, 19.) *not with corruptible things, as ſilver and gold, but with the precious blood of Chriſt.* Obſerve it, I pray, that Chriſt might be a fit way for us to the Father, it coſt the Father, and Chriſt himſelf that, in compariſon of which, ſilver and gold, and the moſt precious things in the world, are called but corruptible things; which makes the apoſtle break out into a way of expoſtulation and admiration, rather than into a way of affirmation; *Oh! what manner of love is this, that the Father hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the ſons of God!* Greater love than this can no man ſhew, than to lay down his life for his enemies. What did it

coſt

coſt the Father? It coſt him that, that was moſt precious to him of all things in the world; it coſt him his own Son, not a ceſſation of the being of his Son, but the bitterneſs of his Son: though a man doth not loſe his child, yet it goes to the heart of him to ſee his child tormented; much more when he himſelf muſt be forced to be the tormentor. *Abraham* thought God put him hard to it, when he muſt be the butcher, to ſlay his own and only ſon, his dear *Iſaac*. God, the Father, was put to it as much, nay, much more: in *Abraham* the thing was but offered, God would not have him do it actually; yet it went to his heart that he ſhould be appointed to do it; but it would have cut his heart if he had done it, if he had cut the throat of *Iſaac*. If nothing could content him before he had a child, *What wilt thou give me, ſeeing I go childleſs?* What would *Abraham* have ſaid, if receiving a child, he ſhould have been made a butcher to his own child? Yet the Father was put to this, to make Chriſt a way to believers: *He was his only beloved Son, in whom he was well pleaſed. Prov.* viii. 30. *I was daily his delight*, (ſpeaking of the Father and Chriſt under the notion of wiſdom) *I was his delight, rejoicing always before him in the habitable parts of his earth.* Muſt it not come near unto him to part with ſuch a Son? Nay, muſt it not go near to him, that he himſelf muſt not only be a ſpectator of all that cruelty, but the principal actor himſelf in the tragedy? He doth not only leave Chriſt to men, but when men could not fetch blood enough, he takes the

rod into his own hand, and will fetch it himſelf from his beloved Son: *It pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him*, (ſaith the prophet, *Iſa.* liii. 10.) It did not only pleaſe the Lord, that men ſhould bruiſe him; but *it pleaſed the Lord* himſelf *to bruiſe him.* It was a ſtrange apprehenſion, that God ſhould look upon the anguiſh of the ſoul of Chriſt, and, inſtead of breaking out into furiouſneſs againſt the inſtruments of cruelty, he himſelf ſhould be ſatisfied with beholding it; as much as to ſay, it did his heart good to ſee it; *He ſhall ſee of the travail of his ſoul, and be ſatisfied*; not only ſatisfied towards men, but ſatisfied in himſelf: it gave him content to ſee the travail of his Son. Certainly, beloved, the bowels of God muſt infinitely be beyond the reach of the creature, towards a poor ſinner, that he could go ſo far in a contrary way to his own Son; that there might be the fruit of theſe bowels to his enemies. One would think, God ſhould rejoice to ſee the confuſion of his enemies; and not rejoice to ſee the bitterneſs of the travail of the ſoul of his Son, that his enemies might eſcape ſcot-free: but this it coſt the Father; he muſt not only behold, or allow the ſuffering of his Son, but he muſt be an actor of it himſelf; nay, he muſt be pleaſed in it.

Certainly, the Father was exceedingly pleaſed with it, becauſe it doth commend the great end of the Father: the main end he drove at, was the ſalvation of ſinners; and this, in his wiſdom, he ſaw the fitteſt way; that it could not be done, but by this way; therefore it pleaſed him, in that his purpoſe

purpoſe ſhould not be fruſtrate of his end. You know, when a man hath a great mind to a thing, if the way he goes in proſpers not, he is diſpleaſed; if it proſper, he is contented in it, he delights to ſee his buſineſs ſucceed; ſo was it with the Father.

You may ſee what it coſt Chriſt too, as well as the Father; the Father muſt reſign his part in his Son; a great matter, not only to part with him, in reſpect of death, but in a manner to part with him in life too; *My God, my God,* (ſaith Chriſt) *why haſt thou forſaken me?* Here, you ſee, God parts with him in life; and Chriſt muſt part with his life, as well as the Father muſt part with the Son; nay, in ſome manner, Chriſt muſt part with that which is better than his life, with the glory and majeſty of his divinity. He did not part with the eſſence of his divinity, but with the glory of it he parted, as *Phil.* ii. 6. *Though he thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet he took upon him the form of a ſervant, and made himſelf of no reputation*; he did empty himſelf, as the meaning of the word is; he did put off and lay aſide the majeſty and glory he had, that he might ſeem to be a meer Carpenter's Son. For a king all his life-time to undergo the notion of a beggar, and not to recover out of this eſtate all his whole life, but even to lie down in this low condition in the grave, it would ſeem a great loſs unto him: man would reckon this a great matter, for a king to debaſe himſelf ſo low; it coſt Chriſt more than this; look upon all the ſufferings of Chriſt; look upon death itſelf; together with the reproach and

ſhame of it. The death he dyed, was called, "A "curſed death of the croſs;" although he was not aſhamed, that is, he deſpiſed the ſhame; yet ſhame and reproach he muſt bear. So, if we look upon God and Chriſt, as making a way for men, it is not a free way, it is not a cheap way; but looking upon ourſelves, that have received the benefit of this way, and this Chriſt, it is a free way indeed, free for man, without any coſt or charge; free, as he is a way to all ſorts of men, none excepted, none prohibited; whoever will, may ſet footing in Chriſt. There is nothing can bar one perſon more than another, from entering into Chriſt as a way. I know, beloved, this ſeems harſh to the ears of ſome people, that there is no difference to be made among men, not only poor, as well as rich, but that the wicked, as well as godly, are admitted; that is ſtrange. But, let me tell you, Chriſt is a free way for a drunkard, for a whore-maſter, for a harlot, an enemy to Chriſt; I ſay, Chriſt is as free a way for ſuch a perſon to enter into him [n], as for the moſt godly perſon in the world. But do not miſtake me, I do not ſay, Chriſt is a free way to walk in him, and yet to continue in ſuch a condition; for Chriſt will never leave a perſon in ſuch a filthineſs, to whom he hath given to enter into himſelf: mark well what I ſay; but for entrance

[n] That is, who has been ſuch a perſon; not that continues ſo, as is preſently obſerved: the ſenſe is, that ſuch are free to come to Chriſt, notwithſtanding their former life, and that without any conditions and qualifications fitting them for his acceptance; and ſo ſtand upon as good a foot, with reſpect to Chriſt's free and hearty admittance of them into him the way, as the moſt godly perſon in the world.

trance into him, Chriſt is as free a way for the vileſt ſort of ſinners, as for any perſon under heaven. If Chriſt hath given a heart to a ſinner, to ſet footing into himſelf; that is, to receive, to take him for his Chriſt; if Chriſt hath given him a heart to take him for his Chriſt in reality, to take him truly and unfeignedly; Chriſt is a way for ſuch a perſon to the Father, though he be the vileſt perſon under heaven. And he is to him a way unto the Father, even while he is ungodly, before he is amended; and he may take his part in this Chriſt, as an ungodly perſon, as well as when he is righteous. In this regard, I ſay, Chriſt is a free way; God looks for nothing in the world from the ſons of men, be they what kind of men ſoever, he looks for nothing from them, to have a right to Chriſt; but he did freely give Chriſt unto them, without conſidering of any thing that they might bring along with them.

Nay, more, God doth not only not look for any thing, but he will not take notice, nor regard any diſcouragements in men, to keep them from the inheritance, to keep him off from giving unto them a right unto Chriſt.

I would fain have this point cleared, and fully and exactly proved, becauſe, I doubt, many perſons will not receive it; but, I tell you, we muſt not be afraid to ſet forth the praiſe of the glory of God's grace, as fearing the ſqueamiſhneſs of ſome men: *firſt*, therefore, conſider, that Chriſt is delivered over unto men, to be their way unto the Father, of meer gift, of free gift: what is

freer than a gift? That Chriſt is delivered over to be a way to the Father, by a meer and abſolute gift, is moſt plainly expreſſed, *Iſaiah* xlii. *I will give thee*, ſaith the text, *to be a covenant to the people*. In matter of gift, what is there in the richeſt man in the world, more than in the verieſt beggar, to partake of , ſuppoſing the thing that comes to him is a gift? A beggar can take a gift as well as the richeſt man; nay, a thief, that is condemned to the gallows, may receive a gift of the king, as well as the greateſt favourite in court; and, if any thing be tendered as a meer gift unto a thief, his very being a thief, and his being ready to be executed, is no prejudice in the world to bar him from participating of that which ſhall be beſtowed upon him as a gift: if Chriſt be a free gift unto men, then it muſt follow, to whom the Father will reach out Chriſt, there is nothing in that perſon to hinder the participating of him.

But ſome will ſay, though Chriſt be a gift, yet he is a gift upon condition.

I anſwer, I cannot ſay but there is a flat contradiction, to ſay he is a gift, and yet conditions required. What are the conditions in a covenant, but a meer bargain and ſale? I will do this, and thou ſhalt do that; do this, and thou ſhalt have that: what difference is there between this, and a bargain and ſale? That God ſhould require conditions of men, is but to receive Chriſt as upon bargain and ſale; but Chriſt muſt be really and actually a gift. When the king

king gives a pardon to a thief, what are the conditions? Peradventure the thief can do his king ſervice, if his life be ſpared; but if his life be ſpared upon ſervice doing, it is not a gift, but a bargain, as much as to make a contract, thus, do ſuch a piece of ſervice, then life is yours. I ſay, it derogates from the nature of a gift, that there ſhould be a condition required; and the goſpel, that is, Chriſt given over to men, cannot be ſaid to be freely given over to them, if man muſt buy him: miſtake me not, I ſpeak not all this while againſt holineſs and righteouſneſs, that becomes a people to whom Chriſt is a way; for holy and righteous they ſhall be; Chriſt will make them holy, and put his ſpirit into them, to change their hearts and to work upon their ſpirits; but this is not the condition required to partake of Chriſt; Chriſt himſelf gives himſelf, and then he beſtows theſe things when he is given. I ſay, Chriſt is given to men firſt, before they do any thing in the world; and all they do, they do by Chriſt preſent in them; *I live, yet not I, but Chriſt lives in me; and the life that I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God.* We do not ſo much live, but by the life of Chriſt, which is life in us. All the actions of life proceed from the ſoul, now preſent; how then comes the actions of the ſoul to be a condition to partake of the ſoul, that gives life, and, by its preſence, works ſuch actions? Chriſt is the ſoul of every believer, that animates, and acts the believer in all things whatſoever; muſt not this

this life, Chriſt, be put into a believer, before he can actuate life, which is a ſtream ſprings from that life? how then can this be a condition to receive, to have Chriſt, when Chriſt is firſt come, by whom theſe things, that are called conditions, are afterwards wrought, he himſelf being preſent to work them? So, ſay I, God beſtows Chriſt upon men to be a way to bring them to the Father; he is an abſolute and free gift: there is no other motive that Chriſt ſhould be any one's ſaviour, than merely the good pleaſure of the Father, the bowels of God himſelf; *Not for thy ſake, but for my own ſake; not for thy ſake, thou art a rebellious and ſtubborn people, but for my own ſake.* Here is the freeneſs of Chriſt, to a perſon coming to him, when he comes merely for God's ſake; and God merely upon his good pleaſure will do it, becauſe he will; *He hath mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and whom he will, he hardeneth: it is not in him that willeth,* (ſaith *Paul, Rom.* ix.) *nor in him that runneth, but in God that ſheweth mercy.* So that Chriſt becomes a way unto them, not out of their will, not out of their diſpoſition, not out of their holy walkings, but out of that mercy that proceeds out of the meer will of God; his own good pleaſure is the only fountain and ſpring of it. Beloved, I beſeech you, ſeriouſly ponder and conſider, that the goſpel is therefore called the goſpel, becauſe it is glad tidings unto men; and ſo the angel interpreted it, *Behold, I bring glad tidings.* Why glad tidings? In this reſpect glad, the poor ſinner, he

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is a broken creature; nay more, he is a dead creature, *Ye, who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.* That life now is reached out unto ſuch a perſon, that is a dead perſon; herein it is plain, that there comes forth that grace from the Lord, that a creature being dead, who can act nothing towards life, yet he ſhall receive life. *The time is coming that the dead ſhall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear it, ſhall live, John* v. 25. How come they by life? is there any action of theirs towards life? They are dead; it is the voice of the ſon of God puts life into their dead ſouls; and it is glad tidings, that though the creature can do nothing, yet Chriſt brings enough with him from the fountain of the Father, to beſtow upon them, to bring them to him. To ſhew you a plain ſcripture, that Chriſt becomes a way to the Father, merely a sa free gift, without any thing in man required, look into *Iſaiah* lv. 1. *Ho, every one that thirſteth,* that is, every one that hath a mind, *come to the waters, he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come and buy wine and milk without money, and without price,* ſaith the prophet; and then he falls upon an objurgation in the next verſe; *Wherefore ſpend ye money for that which is not bread, and labour for that which ſatisfies not? Eat that which is good, and let your ſoul delight itſelf in fatneſs: incline your ear, hearken, and your ſoul ſhall live; I will make an everlaſting covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of* David. Here is the cloſure of all; doſt thou thirſt, that is, haſt thou a mind really

to Chriſt, that Chriſt ſhould ſay really to thy ſoul, I am thy ſalvation? It may be thou doſt ſuſpect, ſaying within thyſelf, Chriſt is not my portion; I am not fit for Chriſt; I am a great ſinner, I muſt be holy firſt: this is bringing a price to Chriſt; but you muſt come without money, and without price: and what is this to come without money, and without price? It is nothing but to take the offer of Chriſt, theſe waters of life, to take them merely and ſimply as a gift brought, and this is a ſure mercy indeed: theſe are the ſure mercies of *David*, when a man receives the things of Chriſt, only becauſe Chriſt gives them; not in regard to any action of ours, as the ground of taking them; I mean, in regard of any action of ours, that we muſt bring along with us, that muſt concur that we may partake of this gift. *Hoſ.* xiv. 4. Chriſt ſpeaks there thus to his people, *I will heal their backſlidings, I will love them freely*; that is, I will love them for mine own ſake. *Rom.* iii. 23, 24. the apoſtle ſpeaks excellently concerning this free grace of God beſtowed in Chriſt upon them; *For all have ſinned and come ſhort of the glory of God, being juſtified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt.* Mark, brethren, firſt he takes off all creatures, and all that a creature can do, *all have ſinned and come ſhort of the glory of God*; then he ſhews how we ſhould partake of juſtification, namely, freely thro' Chriſt. *Rom.* v. The apoſtle ſpeaks at large concerning the participation of Chriſt, to be our Chriſt of

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meer free gift, where he makes a large compariſon of our participation of ſin from *Adam*, and of our participation of life from Chriſt; and ſtill in in every paſſage, ſpeaking of participating of life from and by Chriſt, he comes in with theſe expreſſions of gift, and that it comes freely. *Rom.* v. 15. *But not as by the tranſgreſſion of one, ſo is the free gift; for if through the tranſgreſſion of one, many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man Jeſus Chriſt hath abounded unto many.* There is grace, and the gift by grace; ſo running in this expreſſion in the 17th verſe, he ſaith, *For if by the offence of one, death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteouſneſs, ſhall reign in life by one Jeſus Chriſt.* Still, I ſay, obſerve it, that we partake of life in Chriſt, and by Chriſt; and it runs altogether upon this ſtrain, that it comes by meer gift.

Do but look in *Epheſ.* ii. 4,—10. and there you ſhall perceive how clear and full the apoſtle is in this buſineſs, that Chriſt is made a way to life abſolutely and merely of free gift; *But God*, ſaith he, *who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in ſins, hath quickened us together with Chriſt; by grace ye are ſaved: and hath raiſed us up together, and made us ſit together in heavenly places in Jeſus Chriſt, that in the ages to come he might ſhew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindneſs towards us through Chriſt Jeſus.* Mark how he goes

goes on; *For by grace are ye ſaved, through faith, and that not of yourſelves, it is the gift of God; not of works, leſt any man ſhould boaſt; for we are his workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works.* Still he runs upon mercy and grace, and works he excludes, that no creature might boaſt.

If any thing were done on our part, to partake of Chriſt, we might have whereof to boaſt. So likewiſe ſpeaking of *Abraham*, *Rom.* iv. 2. *For if* Abraham *were juſtified by works, he had whereof to glory:* We ſhould have to glory, if we ſhould have the leaſt hand in the participating of Chriſt; therefore God would give Chriſt freely unto his creature; becauſe man ſhould have no ſtroke in participating of him, that ſo it might be to the praiſe of the glory of his grace; that we ſhould not glory; yea, *That no fleſh ſhould glory in his preſence.* And therefore the ſame apoſtle, *Epheſ.* iii. 12. tells us, that from this grace *we have boldneſs, and acceſs with confidence through the faith of him.* In regard that Chriſt is given unto men to be a way unto the Father, and merely of free gift, hence it is that we have boldneſs and acceſs with confidence by the faith of him. Should we regard our own works or qualifications, there would be ſome mixture of diſtruſt; we ſhould have ſome fear that God would find out ſuch and ſuch a thought; therefore we could never come with boldneſs and confidence, if we did not come in Chriſt as a free gift beſtowed upon

upon us: for if there were one condition, and the leaſt failing in that condition, God might take advantage upon that default, and ſo poſſibly we might miſcarry; and we being jealous and privy to it, that there are faults in all we do, we ſhould be *ſubject all our lives to bondage*, (ſaith the apoſtle) and ſhould fear that God will take advantage of all that which is undone on our part; and ſo not fulfill what he hath promiſed on his part. But ſeeing we have Chriſt beſtowed as a free gift of the Father, *we come with boldneſs and acceſs to the throne of grace.* To eſtabliſh, or a little more to clear this, look (*Heb.* x. 18, 19, 20.) *Now where remiſſion of ſin is, there is no more offering for ſin; having therefore boldneſs to enter into the holieſt, by the blood of Jeſus, by a new and living way that he hath conſecrated for us through the veil, that is to ſay, his fleſh.* How come we to have boldneſs? Through the new and living way made by the blood of Chriſt; not a new and living way by his blood and our actions, but by his blood; that is, only by his blood, merely by his actions; and ſo paſſed over freely to us; this is that which makes us come with ſo much boldneſs.

Look into the cloſure of all the ſcriptures, you ſhall find there can be nothing imagined more free; nay, ſo free, as the participating of Chriſt to be our way to the Father; nothing ſo free as this. (*Rev.* xxii. 17.) *Both the Spirit and the bride ſay, come; let him that heareth, ſay, come; and let him that is athirſt, come; and whoſoever will,* (mark the expreſſion) *let him take of the water of life freely.*

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Haſt thou but a mind to Chriſt? come and take the water of life freely; it is thine; it is given to thee; there is nothing looked for from thee to take thy portion in this Chriſt; thine he is as well as any perſon's under heaven: therefore, you ſhall find our Saviour exceedingly complain of this, as a great fault, *You will not come to me, that you might have life*; *He that comes to me, I will in no wiſe caſt him off*; upon no terms. Thou may'ſt object a thouſand things, that if thou ſhouldſt come, and conclude Chriſt is thy Chriſt, he will reject thee, and that it will be but preſumption; but, in ſo doing, thou rejecteſt thyſelf, and forſakeſt thy own mercy; but Chriſt ſaith, Whoſoever he be, what perſon ſoever, *I will in no wiſe caſt him off, if he come unto me.*

Secondly, As Chriſt is a free way, made over to men by free gift, without any thing in man to partake of this Chriſt, ſo he is a ſafe way to thoſe that do take him: I ſay, Chriſt is a ſafe way, a ſecure way; here is no danger of miſcarriage in Chriſt. Let men take any other way in the world to heaven, but Chriſt, and there are thouſands of dangers, and thouſands of ways to miſcarry; but there is no way that a ſoul can poſſibly miſcarry, that takes Chriſt for his way. *Satan hath deſired to winnow thee*, ſaith Chriſt, *Luke* xxii. 31. ſpeaking to *Peter*, *but I prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not:* nay, he undertakes ſo, for them that come to him, *that the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt them.* Believers that receive Chriſt, have not only the guard of angels to ſecure them, but

but they have the guard of the Spirit of Chriſt, that ſhall lead them; not only lead them into truth, but lead them into all truth. The Spirit will not take a believer and lead him by the hand, and ſet him into the way, (as a friend doth, to lead one a mile out of town, and then leave him alone to go the reſt of the way) no, but the Spirit leads him into truth, and into all truth; he will be a companion of the ſoul, to ſecure it; a conduct to the very harbour and haven itſelf. It is a priviledge of this nation, that merchants may have a convoy, a navy royal, it may be to go out with them, but it will hardly come in with them; therefore there is not abſolute ſecurity in this convoy; but he that takes Chriſt, he hath the Spirit to go in and out before him; to go forth, to come back, to be all the way with him; nay, he hath given himſelf to be his protector, *I will never fail thee, nor forſake thee*, Heb. xiii. 4. In all other ways there may be danger, in reſpect of rubs, in reſpect of difficulties or troubles that may ariſe in them: but, do but look in *Iſa.* xxxv. you ſhall ſee what ſafety there is in this way Chriſt, unto thoſe that make choice of him, in reſpect of any danger that may lie in the way. *Iſa.* xxxv. 8. the prophet tells us, *That a highway there ſhall be, and that way ſhall be called the way of holineſs, and the unclean ſhall not paſs over.* And verſe 9, (mark the ſecurity) *No lion ſhall be there, nor any ravenous beaſt ſhall be found there; but the redeemed of the Lord ſhall walk there:* no lion, no ravenous beaſt, nothing to make them miſcarry. If a man haply

travel through a wilderneſs, there may be bears and lions; as in *New-England*, and in other foreign parts, they lie open to many dangers: ſo let a man chooſe righteouſneſs; I mean his own righteouſneſs, as his way to heaven; oh! what a world of danger lies here! Satan hath continual advantage againſt him from that righteouſneſs; his own corrupt heart is ready to ſwallow him up; but there is no lion in the way, Chriſt.

Thirdly, As he is a ſafe way, ſo he is a lightſome way; Chriſt, I ſay, is a lightſome way to the Father. *Solomon* tells us, *It is a joyful thing for a man to behold the light of the ſun.* It is a great heavineſs and bitterneſs to the ſpirit of a traveller, to be benighted; to be overtaken with darkneſs is very uncomfortable; therefore, when we come to the ſummer-ſeaſons, they are the beſt ſeaſons for travellers, becauſe lightſome and long. All ways to the Father, but Chriſt, are meer darkneſs; nothing but darkneſs; Chriſt is the light of the world; *I am come a light into the world: He is that light, that lighteth every one that cometh into the world.*

Fourthly, Chriſt (and this is an excellent conſideration) is a near way; all that take him to come to the Father by him, have a ſhort way to the Father, in compariſon of any other way whatſoever: Chriſt is the ſtring, other ways are the bow; all other ways are compaſſes about; nay, they are labyrinths, in which men loſe themſelves, after they are wearied with toil; Chriſt is a near way to the Father; *He is nigh that juſtifieth me; who ſhall condemn*

condemn me? Iſa. l. 8. But more eſpecially obſerve, how near a way Chriſt is to the Father; you have it excellently deſcribed in *Rom.* x. 6. *The righteouſneſs which is of faith*, (that is, of Chriſt) *ſpeaks on this wiſe, Say not in thine heart, who ſhall aſcend into heaven? That is, to bring Chriſt down from above; or who ſhall deſcend into the deep? That is, to bring up Chriſt again from the dead: but what ſaith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart; this is the word of faith which we preach.* Mark, when a man chooſes Chriſt for his way to the Father, there needs no clambering up to heaven to fetch down Chriſt, nor digging to the bottom of the deep to fetch him up; Chriſt is ſuch a way to the Father, that inſtead of bringing the man to the Father, he brings the Father down to him; *The word is nigh unto thee, even in thy heart.* Therefore, the apoſtle tells us, *You who were ſometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Chriſt*, Eph. ii. 13. Juſt as if there were ſuch a courſe taken, that the *Indies* (whence are all treaſures) ſhould be brought and ſet at the ſuburbs of *London*; juſt ſo doth Chriſt bring the Father unto men, and becomes ſuch a way, as that there is but one ſtep, from the loweſt condition of ſinfulneſs, to the higheſt of being a ſon of God. There is but one ſtep between the Father, and them that chooſe Chriſt to be the way. And therefore the firſt thing Chriſt preached, was this, *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand:* What is that? It is preſent. You have heard much, I ſuppoſe, of your northern paſſage to the *Indies*;

a great deal of time hath been ſpent to find ſuch a cut, that the voyage may be done in half the time. O look upon Chriſt, he is ſuch a way to the Father, that the voyage is done in a ſtep from a ſtate of ungodlineſs, to the ſtate of juſtification, to the ſtate of ſalvation ſettled upon the ſoul. Chriſt is ſuch a way, that there is but one ſtep from one term to another. Look now but upon the old way of the law, there muſt be a continuance *in all things written in the book of the law to do them:* there muſt be a going on to perfection of righteouſneſs, before men can come to juſtification unto life and ſalvation. This is a long way.

Now, how near hath Chriſt made the way unto the Father? thus near, *He that believeth, ſhall be ſaved.* Let me be bold to tell you, You are in as full an eſtate of juſtification before God; you are in as true a ſtate of ſalvation, you that are believers, as they that are now already in heaven [o]: *Believe in the Lord Jeſus, and thou ſhalt be ſaved*; ſuch a near way is Chriſt.

Yet ſtill people will be cavilling, Where are good works all this while? What, juſtified by faith alone! Saved by Chriſt alone! Let me tell you, if Chriſt be the way, works are not the way, except they be Chriſt [p]. But muſt not we work? Yea, but

[o] That is, their ſtate of ſalvation is real, and they are in as ſafe a ſtate, and have as good a right and claim as the ſaints in heaven, though not in equal poſſeſſion; they are heirs of it, kept unto it, and ſhall certainly enjoy it; and are as compleatly juſtified as they; and, therefore, their ſtate of juſtification is as full.

[p] They are ways which God has ordained his people ſhould walk in, in order to glorify and ſerve him, as follows, but not the way of ſalvation.

but for other purpoſes; the Lord hath propounded other ends for which we are to work; *Ye are bought with a price*, (that is done) *therefore glorify God in your bodies and ſpirits: Being delivered*, (our ſafety it ſeems is paſt) *being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we ſerve in holineſs and righteouſneſs, without fear before him, all the days of our life.* Do we ſerve towards deliverance? Then deliverance is not before ſerving; but ſaith *Zachariah, Being delivered, we ſerve*, Luk. i. 74. *Firſt*, we are delivered from wrath, before we ſtep a ſtep into any duties whatſoever; we do not the duty to be delivered, but we do the duty becauſe we are delivered.

And, ſeeing all things are ſettled by Chriſt for us, of free gift, all we do is for Chriſt himſelf; I ſay, that we do, we do for Chriſt, not for ourſelves [q]. If we do it for ourſelves, we do but labour in vain. Suppoſe we could compaſs never ſo much good by doing, it is but labour in vain, it was compaſſed before hand for us. If a man will run a hundred miles for money, if that money be proffered to him before he ſtep out of his houſe, at his door, his journey is in vain; ſeeing he might have had it before he ſtepped out of his door; and that which was the end of his journey, might have been attained without troubling himſelf at all. Chriſt comes and brings juſtification, loving-kindneſs, and ſalvation, he lays them down, preſents them, delivers them to the heart; when we

[q] Not to obtain righteouſneſs, life, and ſalvation to ourſelves, but for the honour and glory of Chriſt.

are ungodly, he enters into covenant, that we ſhould become his. What need then all this travel for life and ſalvation, ſeeing it is here already?

Obj. But, ſeeing we get nothing by it, this is a diſcouragement for men to work, may ſome ſay.

Anſ. It is true, it is a diſcouragement to all ſelfiſh men to work; and whether a man work or work not at all, it is all one, if it be but for himſelf; if a man work never ſo much, if he be wholly ſelfiſh for himſelf, God rejects it; but when a man will work for Chriſt, that hath a touch of the loving-kindneſs of Chriſt, and therefore ſtands ready to ſpeak forth the praiſe of the glory of his grace that hath ſo freely ſaved him; for ſuch a man to work, is as welcome to him for Chriſt's ſake, as if he were to work for his own ſalvation. You have many ingenuous ſpirits in the world, who will be more free to ſerve a friend that hath already raiſed them, than others will be to ſerve a maſter, that they may be raiſed: there is a ſervice of thankfulneſs, which uſually is more cordial, more ſedulous, than all mercenary ſervices that are forced. This is the true ſervice of a believer in ſerving Chriſt; his eye is to the glory of Chriſt, in regard of what Chriſt hath done already for him; and not in expectation of any thing Chriſt hath to do, which he hath not done. He looks upon all as perfectly done for him in the hand of Chriſt, and ready to be delivered out into his hand, as ſeveral occaſions require: and being thus compleated by Chriſt, not to be mended by the creature, having nothing now to

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do for himſelf, all he doth, he doth for Chriſt. Thus you ſee Chriſt is a near way unto the Father; there cannot be poſſibly a nearer way; ſo that now there is a great deal of labour and bitterneſs ſaved: thus you may be encouraged to receive Chriſt for your way. There are ſome remarkable conſiderations in Chriſt, wherein he is our way, wherein we may receive him, wherein is abundance of comfort; but the time hath out-ſtripped me.

SERMON IV.

Chriſt the Only Way.

JOHN xiv. 6.

I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me.

THE next thing conſiderable is, what kind of way Chriſt is to the Father. *Firſt*, As you have heard already, he is a free way; there is not a bar ſet up againſt any perſon in the world, the way is open: it is a foul deluſion of ſatan in the heart of any man whatſoever, to ſay, Chriſt doth not belong

to me; I would fain have Chriſt, but I may not cloſe with him; let this conſideration be never ſo plauſible, it is a falſe conſideration; for there is no bar in the world, if there be but a heart to ſtep into him. If a man have a mind to ſtep into the king's-highway, which is the ſubject's priviledge, no man can ſay to him, you treſpaſs in ſo doing; it is made to be common for all: ſo is Chriſt a common way to all ſorts of perſons whatſoever, to whom there is a heart given to ſtep into him.

Some are offended that I ſhould ſay, Chriſt is a way even to the drunkard, and to the whoremonger; and the vileſt ſort of perſons have as good a right to Chriſt for their way to the Father, and to apply Chriſt to themſelves, as any. But, be not injurious to the grace of God; be not injurious to yourſelves and others: what ſaith Chriſt himſelf, ſpeaking to thoſe juſticiaries, the Phariſees, both devout and blameleſs men in their lives? even *that publicans and harlots enter into the kingdom of heaven, while they are ſhut out.* If we, the miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt, ſhould preach that a whore hath right to lay hold upon the kingdom of God in Chriſt, to lay hold upon Chriſt for ſalvation; this would be counted a licentious doctrine. Take heed you caſt not dirt into the face of Chriſt; *Publicans* (ſaith he) *and harlots enter into the kingdom of heaven*; I ſay it, therefore, and ſay it boldly, the wickedeſt wretch that ſtands here at this preſent time in the preſence of God, if the Lord hath but given a heart to that wicked wretch,

now

now at this inſtant, willingly to cloſe with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to take the Lord Jeſus Chriſt for his Chriſt, though he be now in the vileſt condition that ever he was in his life; I ſay, if he have a real willingneſs at this inſtant, to cloſe with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, it gives him an abſolute, compleat, and perfect intereſt in Chriſt; he is as much his Chriſt, as the Chriſt of a ſaint ſaved in glory. We are ready to run another ſtrange way: if a man have a little holineſs and righteouſneſs, he thinks now that in regard of that holineſs and righteouſneſs, he may without preſumption cloſe with Chriſt; he doth in this overthrow the way of the goſpel; *He came to ſave that which was loſt*, ſaith the text: but a perſon it ſeems muſt be *found* before he be ſaved. *He came not to call the righteous, but ſinners*; but a man muſt be righteous before he have to do with the calling of Chriſt: ſee now, whether this be with, or againſt the goſpel. Free grace therefore, even to ſinners, is no licentious doctrine, nor doth it a jot maintain the continuance in ſin. I ſay, therefore, Chriſt belongs to a man that cloſeth with him, though he be in his ſinfulneſs: Chriſt indeed waſhes, cleanſes, and adorns a perſon, when he is cloſed withal; but there is none clean, till Chriſt himſelf enters, who makes clean where he enters.

I thought good to ſpeak briefly thus much by way of addition to what I have delivered before: did I know the objections of perſons againſt what I delivered, I ſhould gladly endeavour to give ſatisfaction to them: but obſerve, you ſhall find the whole

whole ſtrain of the goſpel runs continually thus; *Chriſt came to ſave the loſt: he died for the ungodly: while we were ſinners, Chriſt dyed for us: he received gifts for the rebellious, that the Lord might dwell among them*; and ſuch like, are the terms of the goſpel, upon which Chriſt is tendered to our ſouls. Now, then, I ſay, to every afflicted ſoul, art thou rebellious, an enemy, ungodly, a harlot, loſt? Nay, art thou worſe than enmity itſelf? if thou art not worſe, Chriſt came for thee, while thus, though no better: he comes to tender himſelf unto thee to take him, whilſt thou art thus, before thou art any better. Now if this be true, when Chriſt is reached out unto thy ſpirit, why art thou ſo doubtful? why wilt thou anſwer, no, I dare not cloſe with him, he belongs not to me? But, ſuppoſe, Chriſt ſhould ſpeak from heaven as audibly to thy ſpirit, as I do to thy ear, and ſay, Be of good chear, as vile a ſinner as thou art, I am thy Chriſt; wouldſt thou cloſe with him then? ſhould that be goſpel indeed? I tell you, Chriſt cannot, Chriſt will not ſpeak more from heaven than he doth in his goſpel; if you find he ſpeaks in his goſpel, it is as much as if he ſpake it to your ſpirits from heaven. It was a deluſion of the rich man in the parable, he would have *Lazarus* go and tell his brethren from him, in what torments he was: what ſaith *Abraham? If they will not hear* Moſes *and the prophets, neither will they hear if one ariſe from the dead*, Luke xvi. 31. I ſay unto you, if you will not hear the voice of the goſpel, neither would you hear the

the voice of Chriſt ſpeaking to you; for you would ſuſpect whether it were Chriſt or no.

Well, but you will ſay, this is a way to lead men to a licentious courſe of life.

I ſay the contrary: it is the only way to lead men into a more enlarged way of holineſs, than any way in the world, and this I will declare by and by unto you.

We have further conſidered, that Chriſt is a ſafe way; that Chriſt is a lightſome way; that Chriſt is a near way; we cannot dwell upon theſe: we will go on to make good what I promiſed to you; the conſideration of Chriſt, as a free way, to all comers, is the only way to build men up in a more enlarged courſe of holineſs, and righteouſneſs, than all the devices in the world can raiſe them to. Let me tell you, the rareſt ſelf-denial, the frequenteſt prayer in the world, the greateſt ſtudy, the moſt beating down of the body by exacteſt faſtings, reckon what other graces you can, they come all ſhort to build up a man in obedience to the will of Chriſt; they all come ſhort of this one thing, to lay hold upon him as a man is a ſinner; and to receive it as an undoubted truth, that Chriſt is as much my Chriſt now, as he is the Chriſt of a ſaint in heaven. And this will further appear, if we enquire how Chriſt is ſuch a way, as there is no way, wherein there is a quicker and better riddance of the buſineſſes and employments believers ſhall have in the world, than in Chriſt. I will note one thing by the way, before I go on, to make clear this thing, and that

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is this; it is a received conceit among many perſons, that our obedience is the way to heaven; and though it be not, ſay they, *cauſa regnandi*, yet it is *via ad regnum*; though it be not the cauſe of our reign, yet it is the way to our kingdom [r].

Pardon me, if I give you a hint or two of another thing before I go on: let me deliver you this poſition; there is no believer under heaven, doth come to heaven before he hath ſerved his generation: there is no man a believer, and hath received Chriſt, but after he hath received Chriſt, he is created in him unto good works, that he ſhould walk in them. He that ſprinkleth them with clean water, that they become clean from all their filthineſs, puts alſo a new ſpirit in them, and doth cauſe them to walk in his ſtatutes and teſtimonies; *He takes away their ſtony hearts, and gives them hearts of fleſh; he writes his law in their inward parts, and puts his fear into their hearts, that they do not depart from him.* So that I ſay in concluſion, ſanctification of life is an inſeparable companion,

[r] This is a diſtinction of *Bernard*'s, which ſome divines are very fond of; though, I think, he only ſays, it is *via regni*, the way of the kingdom; ſo it may be the way or courſe of thoſe that belong to the kingdom, and yet not be the way to it: obedience and good works are to be performed by all thoſe that are in the way; they lie in the way, and are taken up and done by thoſe that are in it; but they themſelves are not the way, but Chriſt: and as the learned *Hoornbeeck* obſerves, *Sum. Controverſ.* l. 10. p. 716. The Dr. allows, in ſome following paſſages, that ſanctification of life is the buſineſs a believer has to do in his way Chriſt; and that good works are concomitant unto heaven to thoſe that ſhall come thither; and he alſo enumerates the ſeveral ends of doing good works, though not for ſalvation; which ſhews, that he was far from being an enemy to good works, or for giving into licentious practices.

panion, with the juſtification of a perſon by the free grace of Chriſt. But withal, I muſt tell you, that all this ſanctification of life, is not a jot the way of that juſtified perſon unto heaven; it is the buſineſs a man hath to do in his way, Chriſt; but it is not the way itſelf to heaven: if there be no more to clear it but the very text, it is enough: Chriſt here ſaith, *I am the way, no man cometh to the Father but by me:* now I aſk this queſtion, are our works of ſanctification Chriſt himſelf, or are they not? if they be Chriſt himſelf, then there are thouſands of Chriſts in the world: if they be not Chriſt, then there is no coming to the Father by them; becauſe the coming to the Father is by him alone, and by him as he is the ſole way.

Now what derogation is there in this unto works, to ſay, they are not the way to heaven; they are concomitant unto heaven, unto perſons that ſhall come thither: the truth is, ſince redemption is managed by Chriſt, the Lord hath pointed out other ends and purpoſes for our obedience, than ſalvation; ſalvation is not the end of any good work we do; the ends of our good works are, the manifeſtation of our obedience and ſubjection; the ſetting forth of the praiſe of the glory of the grace of God: and as it is the ſetting forth the praiſe of God's grace, ſo actual glorifying him in the world; the doing good to others, to be profitable to men; the meeting of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in them, where he will be found according to the promiſe: theſe are the ſpecial ends

that

that obedience is ordained for; ſalvation being ſettled firm before. All that I will endeavour to build up, is this, to keep the true prerogative of Chriſt to himſelf alone, and that no righteouſneſs of man intrench upon thoſe priviledges that are only his. Take away any thing of Chriſt, and give it to any creature, and you deny Chriſt in part; you deſtroy the goſpel, the life of which ſtands in the ſoleneſs and onelineſs of Chriſt, from the beginning to the end of our perfection.

Now, to come unto that which I promiſed; Chriſt, I ſay, is ſuch a way unto men, that whoſoever chooſeth him for their way, by him they come to a quick riddance and diſpatch of all the buſineſs of holineſs and ſanctification, which they are to do, while they are in Chriſt the way: as it is with merchants that go to ſea, it may be the end of their voyage is the *Indies*; but they have buſineſs in *France*, *Holland*, *Spain*, or *Turky*, and they put in there; their buſineſs is not the way to the end, but it is ſomething they have in the way to do, before they come to their journey's end. All our obedience and righteouſneſs are but ſo many ſeveral buſineſſes here, which we are to diſpatch while we are in our way Chriſt, toward heaven; and while Chriſt is our way, he provides ſo for us that our buſineſs goes on. Now this Chriſt that we have choſen to be our way, is he alone that oils the wheels of our ſpirits, and puts them into a nimble frame. Therefore, (in 1 *Pet.* ii. 3.) *To whom coming* (ſaith the apoſtle) *as unto a Living-Stone*, (ſpeaking of Chriſt) *ye as lively*

ſtones

ſtones are built up: mark it, I pray you; Chriſt, being a *Living-Stone*, makes every one that comes to him *living:* he doth not only give life to a perſon to be active in doing, but he gives livelineſs to him to be nimble in activeneſs; as we ſay, ſuch a man is a lively man, when he is quick in his buſineſs. The Lord Jeſus is as a ſtrong arm that draws a bow; the greater the ſtrength of the arm is, the ſwifter is the flight of the arrow, and the further the arrow reaches; a weak arm makes the arrow fly ſlowly, and fall quickly; the Lord Chriſt, being the ſtrength of every ſoul, he draws the bow with a mighty arm. Do but conceive the more qualmiſh or ſick any man is in his ſtomach, the more unapt ſuch a perſon is to labour, he is ſoon tired and ſpent: now from whence proceeds the qualmiſhneſs of the ſtomach? It proceeds from want of ſpirits, or from weakneſs of ſpirits; weakneſs of life is the occaſion of faintneſs in the ſtomach. But ſuppoſe there be a ſtrong life, ſtrong ſpirits in men, they are mighty to labour. Such is Chriſt our way, ſaith the apoſtle, *When Chriſt, who is our life, ſhall appear, we ſhall appear with him in glory: I live, yet not I, but Chriſt lives in me.* Beloved, Chriſt is life itſelf; *In him was life, and that life was the light of the world.* There is no life, like the life of Chriſt; it is a fountain of life; all life that is beſides, is but the ſtream of that fountain. If, therefore, Chriſt be our life within us, according to the ſtrength of that life, ſuch is the ſtrength of the ſpirit. A great rooted tree you know, ſends up abundance of ſap into the

the branches; whereas a ſmall rooted tree feeds the branches leanly; the larger the root is, the larger the ſap, and bigger the growth, and the fuller is the fruitfulneſs of the tree. Now Chriſt is a large root of the ſoul, where he is once received; and as he is ſuch a root, ſo there are anſwerable ſpirits coming from him. Mark what the apoſtle ſaith, though he confeſſeth of himſelf, he could do nothing of himſelf; yet, ſaith he, *I am able to do all things by Chriſt that ſtrengthens me*; yea, ſo able to do all things, that he confeſſeth to the praiſe of Chriſt's power, *When I am weak, then I am ſtrong:* As if he had ſaid, the ſtronger my ſtrength is in myſelf, the weaker I am to any thing; but the leſs ſtrength there is in me, the more ſtrong am I in Chriſt: therefore he ſends us to Chriſt for ſtrength; *Be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.* I beſeech you, conſider, if you would be active perſons indeed, you muſt have it from him in whom all power and activeneſs conſiſt. You that are poor maid-ſervants, or widows, you do but little in the world, your ſtock doth not reach far; but if you were married to a rich merchant, or ſome ſuch great man, you could do much more; becauſe by the marriage of ſuch a man, you are intereſted into a large ſtock, and his ſtock is yours: ſo cloſing once with the Lord Chriſt, the whole ſtock of Chriſt is yours; in him are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom, and riches and graces beſides; *For it pleaſed the Father, that in him all fulneſs ſhould dwell*, Col. i. 19. Now, when we have a great

ſtock

ſtock to trade upon, there may be a great deal of doing; and, for lack of ſtock, there cannot be ſo much dealings; ſo, as there is a fulneſs of ſtock in Chriſt, there may be a fulneſs of activeneſs in you; eſpecially, when Chriſt doth give you, with that ſtock of life and ſtrength, a faculty of ability to act that ſtock; when he gives not only ſtrength, but wiſdom to manage ſuch ſtrength unto advantage.

Beſides, Chriſt is ſuch a way, that the buſineſs you have to do in the way, ſhall be done by him exactly, compleatly, and neatly. There is never a ſchool-maſter in the world can teach the perfect trade of walking uprightly, but Chriſt alone; therefore in the new covenant, you ſhall find this one of the main clauſes, *They ſhall be all taught of God*; that is, that Chriſt who is God and man, the mediator of the new covenant.

Men are but bunglers, that are taught by any other but God. We that are the miniſters of the goſpel, leave you dunces in chriſtianity, in matters of practice, until the Lord Jeſus Chriſt come into that miniſtry, and, by his Spirit, teach your ſpirits; and then when he comes, you ſhall be exact in ſkilfulneſs; *I am wiſer than my teachers*, ſaith *David*; ſo when Chriſt comes to teach you, you ſhall be wiſe as your ſchool-maſter. Now if a ſchool-maſter cannot make true latin, the ſcholar will hardly do it; if the ſcrivener cannot write well, the ſcholar will make but crows-claws, as we uſe to ſay: learn this truth, if you will be exact in the chriſtian ſcholarſhip, in the myſteries

of Chriſt; go to ſchool to Chriſt; that is, take Chriſt for your Chriſt; wait upon him to inſtruct you, to direct you, to make you ſkilful; then ſhall you be infinitely more exact, than by running to any other teacher in the world. Chriſt, then you ſee, is ſuch a way, by which we attain to a quicker riddance of all the buſineſs we have to do in this way, than any other courſe beſides.

Conſider in the next place, as Chriſt is a way of quick riddance, ſo he is a ſure way, a firm way, a hard way; there is no fear of ſinking while we keep this cauſy, this road, as I may call it. Gluts of rain make ſome claiey, boggy ways, ſinking; both cart and man, and all, may ſtick faſt and ſink in them: as for Chriſt, he is a way ſo rocky, that all the rain that falls upon this way, runs away; it makes it never a jot the more ſinking. A man may be as firm, as ſecure in the greateſt ſtorm, as he ſhall be in the faireſt weather. I mean thus, Chriſt will not deceive; every thing in the world elſe will deceive a man, but Chriſt will never deceive him: you have obſerved ſometimes, I know, ſome places that have been as green and fair to the eye, as the beſt way that ever men ſet foot into; but ſet your foot into them, and you ſink up to the neck, they are boggy quagmires. I muſt tell you, while men make their own righteouſneſs and obedience their way to the father, they ſeem to be in a fair and green way, which promiſeth firmneſs; but he that dares to truſt himſelf in the way of his own righteouſneſs, to the Father, ſhall find himſelf ſo ſinking,

ing, that if Chriſt come not and pluck him out, he ſhall ſink over head and ears. Ye that go to the Father, and think to ſet yourſelves in his preſence, and ſtand in his delight, in the way of your own righteouſneſs, ſhame and confuſion of face will cover you before you be aware. *Paul* durſt not be found in it, but looked upon it as dung; dung you know is ſinking; the righteouſneſs of *Paul* he ſaw it, he knew it, it did not only ſtink in the noſtrils of God as dung, but it was a ſinking way; he himſelf could never keep firm footing to go to the Father by it; therefore, he ſaith, *Phil.* iii. 8, 9. *I account all but dung, that I may win Chriſt, and be found in him; not having mine own righteouſneſs, that is according to the law, but the righteouſneſs that is by faith in Chriſt.* Let a man venture himſelf upon Chriſt, as he is a way to the Father, and he ſhall not ſink. *Fear not*, ſaith Chriſt, in *Iſa.* xli. 10. *I am with thee, be not diſmayed, I am thy God; I will help thee, I will ſtrengthen thee, I will up-hold thee, with the right-hand of my righteouſneſs: I will uphold thee*; all the righteouſneſs of man is not able to uphold him; nay, there is that in man's righteouſneſs that will ſink him: where there is ſinfulneſs in mens actions, in their righteouſneſs; that ſinfulneſs is enough to trip up their heels, to lay them in the dirt, to lay them flat upon their backs, that they cannot riſe again. Let men come before God with this righteouſneſs, if God find fault with that in which they preſent themſelves, they are gone for ever: *Let a man keep the whole law, and*

at laſt fail in one point, he is guilty of all. See then how firmly he ſtands, that is built upon a rock. He that builds upon Chriſt, builds upon a rock; nothing can ſhake him: he tranſgreſſes, it is true, but Chriſt carries away his tranſgreſſion, that before it comes to the eye of the Father, it is gone into the wilderneſs; *He caſts it behind his back, he throws it into the bottom of the ſea, it is blotted out*, as the text ſpeaks. So that ſtill, I ſay, as water falling upon a rocky way, glides away as faſt as it falls, that the way is as hard as before the rain fell, and a man may ſtand as firm there as before; ſo all our ſinfulneſs, while we are in the way Chriſt, as thick as it falls, Chriſt hath ſo made himſelf ſuch a way, that it paſſeth off from us to him, and from him alſo. We have garments made now a-days, that if rain falls, it will glide off a man, and ſo not ſoak into him. Chriſt is our garment; all the wet that falls upon us, lights on him; it falls from us to Chriſt himſelf; that is, all our tranſgreſſions, when once we are in Chriſt, paſs from us to him. Now he hath a garment as well for himſelf, as for us; that though our ſins fall from us to him, yet they remain not upon him. The Lord, indeed, laid the iniquities of all upon Chriſt; but he paſſed away all this iniquity from himſelf, by making full ſatisfaction to the Father. If Chriſt ſhould have our ſinfulneſs remaining upon him, when it glides from us, he himſelf would be a ſinking way to us. If Chriſt were ſinful in the eyes of God, we could never be clean in his eyes; it is

through

through his cleanneſs we become clean. Now Chriſt is ſuch a way to believers that receive him, that he took away all their ſins from them, bore them all, and left them in his own grave, and raiſed himſelf without them. So here is no ſin charged upon believers, nor upon Chriſt; it was laid upon Chriſt, it is true, but he hath caſt it off, and ſweat it out; it is evaporated and gone from him too.

Thus you ſee Chriſt is a firm way, a ſecure way, to a perſon; he ſhall not ſtir, he ſhall not be moved, as long as he keeps Chriſt to be his way. Once again, As Chriſt is a firm way to believers, ſo he is a moſt pleaſant way; I ſay, a moſt delightful, a moſt refreſhing and recreating way; Chriſt is a way, as if it were all ſtrewed with flowers; there is nothing but mirth and ſweetneſs in him. In *Prov.* iii. 17. there you ſhall find Chriſt ſpoken of, under the notion of wiſdom, of whom it is affirmed, *That her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs:* not only pleaſant ways, but ways of pleaſantneſs; as if there were nothing but pleaſures; as if the ways were ſubſtantial pleaſures, or full of all manner of delight. Do but obſerve a notable expreſſion in *Iſa.* xxxv. 1, 2. he ſpeaks as if he had been an apoſtle in the time, or after the time of Chriſt: you may ſee, by him, what a pleaſant way Chriſt is to all thoſe that chooſe him for their way: in the 1ſt verſe, you have him expreſſing himſelf thus, *The wilderneſs and the ſolitary places ſhall be glad, and the deſart ſhall rejoice and bloſſom as the roſe.* He means thus, That whereas men lived as

in the wilderneſs, and in a deſart place; that is, in a ſad and ſolitary condition; they ſhall be tranſlated into ſuch a way, into ſuch a pleaſant way, that there ſhall be gladneſs and rejoicing; there ſhall be the bloſſom of roſes in this way. And to illuſtrate the pleaſantneſs of the way into which Chriſt tranſlates his, by tranſlating them into himſelf, he goes on in the 2d verſe, *It ſhall bloſſom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and ſinging*; *the glory of* Lebanon *ſhall be given unto it, the excellency of* Carmel *and* Sharon; *they ſhall ſee the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God*; nothing but pleaſure: it is compared to *Lebanon*, the ſweeteſt place in the world; to *Carmel* and *Sharon*, places of great delight; ſuch ſhall be the way chalked out, and held forth unto believers. Look into the laſt verſe of the chapter, and ſee what a way of pleaſure Chriſt is unto all thoſe that receive him; *And the ranſomed of the Lord ſhall return, and come to* Sion *with ſongs and everlaſting joy upon their heads*; *they ſhall obtain joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and ſighing ſhall fly away.* Behold the mirth that is in the way, Chriſt! there is nothing but joy and gladneſs.

But ſome will ſay, Believers find it otherwiſe; there is not ſuch joy and gladneſs, but they are often oppreſſed with ſadneſs and heavineſs of ſpirit.

I anſwer, There is not one fit of ſadneſs in any believer whatſoever, but he is out of the way Chriſt[s]; I mean, in fits of ſadneſs in reſpect of his

[s] That is, as to the enjoyment of him, as it is afterwards explained; or with reſpect to the exerciſe of faith, or comfortable

his jealouſly of his preſent and future eſtate; he is out of the way of Chriſt, he enjoys not him as he ought, while he is in ſuch fits. Therefore, the apoſtle puts believers upon rejoicing always; *Rejoyce in the Lord always, and again, I ſay, rejoyce, Phil.* iv. 4. There is matter of nothing but joy in him: while there is mourning in believers, there are meltings in thoſe mournings; and more joy in the mourning of a believer, than in all the mirth of a wicked man. I appeal to you, that have had melted hearts, whether you have not found a ſecret content in your meltings, that you rather fear the change of that mourning, than that you are troubled with it?

That, which is a moſt common proverb in the world, is moſt certainly true in this preſent caſe, "Some men for joy do weep, others for ſorrow "ſing." I ſay, believers weep for joy, and never mourn more kindly, than when they ſee the joy of the Holy Ghoſt, in the freeneſs and fulneſs of the Lord Chriſt, poured out upon them: there is never any more kindly mourning for ſin, than that mourning, when the ſoul is ſatisfied of forgiveneſs of ſins: I ſay, the ſoul is firſt ſatisfied with forgiveneſs of ſins, before there is that real kindly mourning in thoſe that are believers. You have heard of ſome perſons, I know, that have been condemned to be executed, who at the ſcaffold have been ſo obdurate, and ſtiff-necked, that not a cry, not a tear came from them; yet, juſt when their necks

fortable walking in the way, Chriſt, as becomes a believer; otherwiſe he that is once in Chriſt is always ſo; he can never be out of him, as to intereſt in him, and ſalvation by him.

went to the block, upon the coming of the pardon, when they were diſcharged, they that could not weep a tear, nor be affected with their eſtate, no ſooner do they ſee a pardon, and themſelves acquitted, but they melt all into tears: ſo it is with believers, the more they ſee Chriſt in the pardon of ſin, and the love of God in Chriſt to receive and embrace them, the more they melt. Therefore, *Solomon* hath a notable expreſſion; *If thine enemy hunger*, (ſaith he) *give him bread*; *and, if he thirſt, give him drink*; *ſo ſhalt thou heap coals of fire upon his head*, Prov. xxv. 21, 22. As much as if he ſhould have ſaid, Kindneſs is the beſt way in the world to melt the moſt obdurate wretch. Thus God deals with men through Chriſt; he gives them bread when they are hungry, and drink when they are thirſty; and thus he heaps coals of fire upon their heads; that is, he melts them.

So, you ſee, what an admirable way Chriſt is, all full of pleaſure; there is the Spirit of Chriſt to make muſick unto a ſoul. *Speak comfortably unto my people*, ſaith God: and this is the office of the Spirit, and the Spirit doth nothing elſe but ſpeak comfortable things. Chriſt is a way, as the cellars of wine are unto drunkards, that are never better than when they are at the cup; and, therefore, no place like the cellar, where there is fulneſs of wine always to be tipling and drinking: I ſay, Chriſt is ſuch a way; and let it not be offenſive to ſay ſo, for the church ſpeaks in the ſame language, *Cant.* ii. 4, 5. *He brought me* (ſaith ſhe) *into his wine-cellar*; *ſtay me with flaggons, comfort me with apples,*

for

for I am ſick of love. Chriſt hath ſuch variety of delicates ſerved in continually, and ſuch ſweetneſs in this variety, that the ſoul is no longer ſatisfied than it is with Chriſt. Here is not ſtaying with cups, much leſs with half cups, but ſtaying with whole flaggons; there is a kind of inebriating, whereby Chriſt doth, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, make believers, that keep him company, ſpiritually drunk; he overcomes them with his wine. *In that day, ſaith the Lord, I will make a feaſt of fat things, full of marrow, of wine well refined upon the lees*, Iſa. xxv. 6. Here is abundance, it is a feaſt, and *a feaſt of fat things full of marrow*, which is the beſt of fatneſs; a feaſt *of wine well refined upon the lees*, pure and clarified wines; this is the entertainment Chriſt hath for thoſe that keep him company. The Pſalmiſt, in *Pſal.* xxxvi. 7, 8. hath an excellent expreſſion to this purpoſe, (ſpeaking of the excellency of Chriſt) ſaith he, *Therefore the ſons of men ſhall put their truſt under the ſhadow of his wings:* well, what follows, when they put their truſt under the ſhadow of his wings, that is, when they ſhall make choice of him to be their way; *They ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with the fatneſs of thy houſe; thou ſhalt make them drink of the rivers of thy pleaſure.* Mark, *of thine*, for (ſaith he) *With thee is the well of life:* here are not only pleaſures, but rivers of pleaſures; here is not only life, but a well of life; ſuch dainties and delicates, ſuch curioſities and rarities, as the world can never ſhew, nor ſee, nor taſte. We read in the *Revelations*, of *a white ſtone, and a new name*

name written in it, which none could know, nor read, but he that had it. This I am ſure of, there are delights in Chriſt, none can poſſibly reach unto, but thoſe to whom Chriſt doth give himſelf, and thoſe that receive him: therefore, in *Matt.* xi. 25. our Saviour thanks his Father thus; *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes; even ſo, becauſe it pleaſed thee.* And it is worth obſerving, he doth not thank him, that he hath revealed them to the mighty, and great, and wiſe, that abound in all manner of abilities far above others, but *unto babes*; there is much in that phraſe; a babe is the weakeſt of all ſorts of men; implying thus much, that the weakeſt of all believers, in the body of Chriſt, as I may ſay, the feebleſt babe, ſhall partake of ſuch hidden things, ſuch excellencies of Chriſt, that all the world ſhall never be able to dive into, reach, nor comprehend; and Chriſt himſelf takes ſuch delight in their ſocieties, that he takes occaſion to bleſs God, the Father, that he is ſo large for his ſake, to do ſo much for them, above what he did for others. So you ſee, Chriſt is alſo a pleaſant way, a way of exceeding great content and delight: there is yet one thing more.

Chriſt is a way, of all the ways in the world the moſt eaſy to be hit; there is no difficulty to find it out, nor to find out a progreſs in it. Many ways may lead unto a comfortable end; but there are ſo many croſs ways to turn men out, that they loſe themſelves. In the way of works a man may preſently

preſently loſe himſelf; there is not one work he doth, but he commits ſin in it, and ſo he preſently ſteps aſide, and loſes himſelf, and muſt begin again, and go about, and come where he was at firſt. God will never let any ſoul come near unto him, that comes to him with any ſin whatſoever; if there be any one ſin, all muſt be undone, a man muſt begin again, as they ſay. I ſpeak this of the righteouſneſs of man, while he makes that his way to God. Therefore Chriſt is the way; there is no ſtepping aſide in Chriſt, no loſing of him. There cannot be an error committed, which, when a man comes to the Father by Chriſt, ſhall be taken notice of, as an error from that perſon: ſo, I ſay, it is the eaſieſt way in the world to be hit. It is true, what *Peter* ſaith of *Paul*, *Many things in his writings are very hard to be underſtood*; but mark, in the goſpel, things that do pertain unto the juſtification of a ſinner, are written in ſuch great and plain letters, that he that runs may read them. Do but obſerve a few expreſſions, which ſhew how eaſy it is to hit the way, Chriſt himſelf being the way; in *Iſa.* xxxv. 8. *A highway there ſhall be, and the wayfaring men, though fools, ſhall not err therein.* The Pſalmiſt tells us, that *the commandments of God give light unto the eyes*; the goſpel out of queſtion makes the ſimple wiſe: there are ſome things, you know, that you are able to teach fools; though you are not able to teach them deep myſteries.

Beloved, Chriſt the way to ſalvation, makes himſelf ſo plain to thoſe that come unto him, that though

though they be very fools, yet they ſhall not miſtake, nor err; nay, though fools and wayfaring men: a wiſe man, if he be a wayfaring man, that is, a ſtranger, may miſs his way; but if a man be a ſtranger, and a fool too, it muſt be a very eaſy way that he hits. A fool may hit a way in which he hath long converſed, which ſtrangers may eaſily miſs; but, ſaith the Holy Ghoſt, the way that Chriſt is made to men, is ſuch a way, that *fools, though wayfaring men, ſhall not err therein.*

Again, Chriſt is the way, and ſuch a way, as is a ſpacious, large, elbow-room way, as I may ſo ſay: there is abundance of largeneſs and elbow-room in Chriſt the way to the Father; therefore Chriſt himſelf ſaith, *If the Son make you free, then are you free indeed.* When Chriſt comes to bring liberty to men, then they are at liberty indeed: therefore, it is ſaid, *Gal.* v. 1. *Stand faſt in the liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made you free, and be not intangled again with the yoke of bondage:* when a man enters into Chriſt, he enters into liberty and freedom; there is a contracted bondage in every way and condition but in Chriſt alone.

But ſome will ſay, How do you anſwer that place in *Matt.* vii. 14. *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it?* How can Chriſt be ſuch a way of liberty, when the way is ſaid to be an exceeding ſtrait and narrow way?

I anſwer, (firſt mark the words that go before) Chriſt ſpeaks not this ſimply, but comparatively; the way is ſtrait and narrow, in compariſon of that

he

he ſpeaks of; for the words before are, *Broad is the way, and wide is the gate, that leadeth to deſtruction, and many there be that enter in thereat:* then he comes in afterwards with theſe; *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life*; that is, in compariſon of the vaſt liberty and ſcope the world takes to walk in, and the vaſt rangings of their vain hearts, it is a ſtrait way; but, ſimply conſidering him in himſelf, he is a large way; large in reſpect of the number that go in it, and in reſpect of the elbow-room in it. In a narrow way, few can go a-breaſt, it will hold but a few men; but, in open broad ways, many may go together. Mark, now, how Chriſt is a large and ſpacious way; *He died not for our ſins only, but for the ſins of the whole world*, 1 Joh. ii. 2. See what a ſpaciouſneſs there is in Chriſt, that the whole world, the multitude of people of all ſorts in the world, may have elbow-room in this way.

But, *ſecondly, Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way:* what is this ſtraitneſs? to this queſtion perhaps you will anſwer, a ſtrict, auſtere, and ſevere life; a preciſeneſs and exactneſs without giving to a man's ſelf any liberty whatſoever: this is the ſtraitneſs of the way, that leadeth unto life. But give me leave to add, I confeſs the ſtricter chriſtians can walk, the better; and Chriſt will more and more confine the life of a believer unto a holy exactneſs; but, under favour, I conceive, this is not the meaning of the text here, that by the ſtaitneſs of the way, is meant ſtrict-

neſs

neſs of converſation: but rather the meaning is, *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way*; that is, it hath not that latitude in it, that generally men think it hath. What is that? men generally think, that beſides Chriſt, there is ſomething more in the way that leadeth to life, and that is a man's own righteouſneſs; not only Chriſt, but a man's own righteouſneſs joyntly together with Chriſt; theſe are the way to ſalvation: this is the conceit of many men; but I ſay, it is ſtrait and narrow, in this regard, that all a man's own righteouſneſs muſt be cut out of the way; it muſt be ſo narrow, that there muſt be nothing in the way, but Chriſt; when a man's own righteouſneſs is taken into the way, beſides Chriſt, then it is a broader way than Chriſt allows of; he allows only that way to [t] himſelf. And that this is the meaning, ſeems to me by the words that follow:

Beware

[t] Mr. *Anthony Burgeſs*, in his *Vindiciæ Legis*, p. 32. finds great fault with the Dr's ſenſe of *Matt.* vii. 13, 14. applying the words to Chriſt, which he repreſents as a forc'd interpretation of them; whereas nothing is more eaſy and natural, for, as Chriſt elſewhere calls himſelf a door, and a way, *John* x. 9. and xiv. 6. why not here a gate and a way? Moreover, if any thing beſides Chriſt is here meant, there muſt be more ways than one to heaven, and Chriſt could not be the only way; for certain it is, that the way here ſpoken of leads to eternal life, for nothing elſe can be meant by life: and as to what this writer ſays, that then by the oppoſition, not wickedneſs, but the devil himſelf would be the broad way. It may be replied, that not the devil only is oppoſed to Chriſt, but every thing that is wicked, yea that has the appearance of good, but is not really ſo; and the broad way may very well be thought to take in the devil, and all his luſts, which men will do, and walk in; and not only open vice and prophaneneſs, but all the falſe guiſes of religion and holineſs, and a man's own polluted and phariſaical righteouſneſs, to which Chriſt and his righteouſneſs ſtand oppoſed. *Matt.* v. 20.

Beware (ſaith Chriſt in the next words) *of falſe prophets, that come in ſheeps cloathing, that inwardly are ravening wolves:* it ſeems, in this Chriſt gives a warning, how to beware of falſe prophets, by telling men, *That ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth to life:* And what falſe prophets were they? if you conſult with *Luke*, *Acts* xv. 1,—24. you ſhall underſtand who theſe falſe prophets were, and withal, the meaning of this text: there you ſhall find that theſe falſe prophets were they that troubled the church, and occaſioned that aſſembly, the firſt council that ever was: ſome (ſay the council) *that went out from us, have troubled you with words ſubverting your ſouls, ſaying, you muſt be circumciſed, and keep the law, or elſe you cannot be ſaved:* theſe are the falſe prophets Chriſt meant, that would make the obſervation of the law of *Moſes*, and circumciſion, to be co-partners with Chriſt, as a way to ſalvation; to whom ſay the apoſtles, *We gave no ſuch commandment.* You ſhall find, that in the epiſtles to the *Galatians* and *Coloſſians*, all the apoſtle's conteſts were with ſuch *falſe prophets that came in ſheeps cloathing*; they were not falſe prophets that came in wolves habits, that are openly prophane and ſcandalous; they can deceive no man, they ſhew themſelves to all; but they are *falſe prophets in ſheeps cloathing*; that is, they ſeem to be ſheep, they ſeem to be auſtere, they ſeem to preach nothing but righteouſneſs and holineſs; but yet they are ravenous wolves; how ſo? they make men build upon their own righteouſneſs,

and

and not upon Chriſt, and ſo deſtroy poor ſouls: theſe are thoſe the apoſtle bids us beware of, in *Gal.* iii. 1, 2, 3. *Who*, ſaith he, *hath bewitched you, that ye ſhould not obey the truth, before whoſe eyes Jeſus Chriſt hath been evidently ſet forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the fleſh?* Thus he argues againſt the falſe prophets, that will eſtabliſh the righteouſneſs of man, as the way to life.

In a word or two, there are two things more conſiderable, I will but touch them; Chriſt is a ſhady way; in hot weather, men much deſire ſhady places: you know the caſe of *Jonah*, when he was ſcorched with heat, God provided for him a gourd, and how comfortable was it upon him? Chriſt is a ſhady way: *Hide thyſelf for a little moment, till the indignation be over-paſt*, ſaith Chriſt, *Iſa.* xxvi. 20. When the ſcorching glooms of God's wrath break out into the world, Jeſus Chriſt is a hiding place, *till the indignation be over-paſt.*

Again, Chriſt is a quiet way; there are ſome private ways men affect, becauſe there is but little diſturbance; but in ſome other ways, eſpecially in ſome common road-ways, there is nothing but quarrelling and revelling; but Chriſt, he is a quiet way; all is peace while you are in Chriſt; *The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing*, Rom. xv. 13. believe, and there is all peace for you; *being juſtified* (Rom. v. 1.) that is while you are in Chriſt to juſtific you, there is

Peace

Peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and nothing but peace. I ſee the time is paſt; ſomething elſe I ſhould have conſidered, eſpecially the ground why Chriſt is ſuch a way, but I ſhall rather break off abruptly.

SERMON V.

Chriſt's Preheminence.

COLOSSIANS i. 18.

That in all things He might have the preheminence.

THIS admirable, ſweet, and comfortable apoſtle of the Gentiles, makes it the maſter-piece of his apoſtleſhip, to woo and win people unto Chriſt: *We are the ambaſſadors of Chriſt, beſeeching you, in Chriſt's ſtead, to be reconciled unto God:* as in all the reſt of his epiſtles, ſo eſpecially in this, and more eſpecially in this 1ſt chapter, he ſhews an excellent faculty he hath this way, in this buſineſs of wooing people to come to Chriſt: he obſerves what moſt effectually takes with people to beguile their ſpirits, as

he ſpeaks himſelf, with a kind of craft to catch their affections; eſpecially, if you obſerve from the 15th verſe of this chapter, and ſo on, you ſhall find, the apoſtle meets with every thing that is moſt enamouring and taking with the people. The world is mightily taken with beauty, with compleatneſs of perſon; oh! ſaith one, let me have a beautiful perſon, it is no matter how poor: if beauty be ſo taking, then, ſaith the apoſtle, I will preſent a rare piece indeed to you, in preſenting Chriſt; for ſuch is the beauty of Chriſt, that there is no beauty like his; he (ſaith he) is *The image of the inviſible God*: that is one commendation of his. But, will ſome ſay, ſo is every man as well as Chriſt; what rareneſs is there in Chriſt in this regard? It is true, man is after the image of God, but where the apoſtle calls him *The image of the inviſible God*, he ſpeaks in an eminent manner; therefore, you ſhall find him expreſſing himſelf more fully, in ſetting forth the rare beauty of Chriſt, in *Heb.* i. 3. *Who being the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon.* He is the image of God to the life, as I may ſay; he is ſo like him, you cannot know one from the other: he hath ſo the perfections of God, that there can be nothing more like than he is unto the Father, expreſſing the brightneſs of his glory. But there are ſome, though they find beauty, yet that alone will not take; beſides that, ſome men look for lineage, what ſtock a perſon is of: is he come of a good houſe, of a noble and royal blood? blood is a great matter, eſpecially with high ſpirits.

Well,

Well, if this will take, then there is no ſtock like this of Chriſt; he is of the greateſt houſe in the world; *The firſt-born* (ſaith the apoſtle) *of every creature:* he comes of that great houſe, of God himſelf.

And ſo doth the creature too, you will ſay; what rarity is there in Chriſt above the creatures? they all come of God.

I anſwer; But, beloved, the creatures are of, and in the houſe of God, as the apoſtle ſpeaks of *Moſes*, in *Heb.* iii. 5. *As ſervants in the houſe*; Chriſt as a ſon; Chriſt is not only of a royal houſe, but he is born of that royal houſe; he is the natural Son of the Father, *This is my beloved Son*; ſo that he is of the very blood-royal; (as I may ſo ſay with reverence) and he is not a younger brother in this houſe neither, for he is the firſt-begotten of the houſe; that is a great matter, among perſons, to marry the heir of a family; ſo he is. Nay, more than that, he is the only-begotten of the houſe; there is never another in all the family; and that is a great encouragement, he is *the only begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth*, ſaith the apoſtle, *John* i. 14. So that if men go all the world over, to find a match in the nobleſt houſe, they will never meet with ſuch a one as this of the Son of God. Thus he commends him. But yet ſome are ready to ſay, "Suppoſe he be of a noble houſe, he may be in diſgrace, and he may live privately, and have no authority, nor be able to do any great matters." If this will do, then the apoſtle commends Chriſt as the rareſt, in re-

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ſpect of his power and authority; *All things were made by him, and for him*; that is, all things in the world are at his command and beck; they bow unto him, they ſtoop before him; *At his name every knee ſhall bow, both of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth*; every thing goes through his hands.

Yea, but it may be, will ſome ſay, he is in diſgrace in court, that is a blur upon him.

I anſwer, No, he is not ſo great in the country, but he is as great in the court too; for, as he hath the whole world under his power, ſo he hath the great king at his beck; he commands in heaven, as he doth upon earth; there is nothing he can aſk of the Father, but it is anſwered; he never has a nay; if any come to be ſuiter to him to put up a petition, he is ſure to ſpeed.

But, for all this, he may be but a poor man, though he have never ſo great power in court and country; if he be poor, I ſhall live but poorly with him; if he were rich, and had abundance of wealth, then there were ſome hope, ſome encouragement to take ſuch an one.

I anſwer, Chriſt is not greater in court and country, than he is rich in treaſure; ſo you ſhall find in the 19th ver. *It pleaſed the Father, that in him all fulneſs ſhould dwell.* All fulneſs; all the treaſures of wiſdom are hid in him; he hath the whole world to diſpoſe of; therefore ſilver and gold are not to be compared unto him.

Yea, but yet there is one thing more; though he hath riches, yet he may prove a niggard, cloſe-

fiſted,

ſiſted, he may keep all to himſelf; the party that hath him may be poor enough, for want of contribution.

But, beloved, he is not more rich himſelf, than he is liberal to contribute of his treaſure, to make thoſe that are his, ſharers to the uttermoſt of all that he hath. Therefore, in chap. ii. 10. (for he follows this ſubject all along) the apoſtle tells us, not only, as in verſe 9. *That in him dwells the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily*, but *You are compleat in him, who is the head of the body*. The head, you know, is not a niggard; what fulneſs the head hath, it communicates to every part: Chriſt is a head, and a head of fulneſs, the fulneſs of the Godhead. And as the head is not ſparing, but diſperſeth, and ſcattereth all that is in it, ſo that every member ſhall have a ſhare; and not a ſhare merely to keep life and ſoul together, as we ſay, but a ſhare to make a man compleat: ſo, if any perſons in the world would deviſe what they could deſire in ſuch a one to match themſelves unto, you ſhall find that a creature cannot frame thoſe perfections, in its fancy, which it would enjoy; I ſay, men cannot frame any perfections, to come ſo near the real perfections of Chriſt, as a ſhadow comes near the ſubſtance. You have a proverb, that "Batchelors wives, and maids children, muſt "be rare creatures;" that is, their fancy will deviſe what kind of one they will have, and what kinds of perfections they deſire. Let the fancy deviſe what kind of perfection it can, to pleaſe ſenſe, Chriſt ſhall really out-ſtrip, in perfection, all

theſe fancies, more than a ſubſtance doth out-ſtrip a ſhadow.

Now, the apoſtle having delivered himſelf thus fully by way of wooing unto Chriſt, he comes to cloſe in the words of the text; and ſo declares the end and purpoſe for which he ſets out Chriſt in ſo many excellencies as he did; the end of this was, *That in all things he might have the preheminence*; that he may be taken for the moſt excellent thing in the world; that all things may be rejected, rather than he; and he ſet above every thing in the world. So then, the point in brief is this, *In regard of the rare excellencies, and perfections, and uſefulneſs of Chriſt, which are incomparable, he ought to have the preheminence in all things.* In handling of which, we ſhall conſider,

Firſt, *What the preheminence is, which Chriſt ought to have.*

Secondly, *Why he ſhould have the preheminence in all theſe.* And then, a word or two of application.

Firſt, *What is this preheminence that Chriſt ſhould have.* I will not inſiſt upon the word preheminence: you all know, to give a perſon or thing the preheminence, is no more than this, to ſet up ſuch a perſon or thing above all others, and eſpecially for thoſe uſes and purpoſes we have occaſion of them for: I ſay, to chooſe ſuch a perſon before any other, as a perſon who can better, and more certainly bring to paſs what we deſire, than any elſe can. So that in brief, to give Chriſt the preheminence, is, to ſet up Chriſt above all things

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in the world; to chooſe Chriſt, rather than any thing, for every uſe and purpoſe to make of him: I ſay, above and before any thing whatſoever, as apprehending him infinitely more able and ſufficient unto ſuch purpoſes, than any thing elſe is.

But more particularly, that we might the better ſee what the preheminence is, that Chriſt ought to have; you muſt know, that there is an infallible pattern drawn out unto us, according unto which we are to write our copy. In general, therefore, the preheminence we are to give unto Chriſt, is, the preheminence that the Father hath given unto him before us, and revealed unto us, that we may, in our way, give the ſame to him: therefore, we muſt conſider a while what preheminence the Father gives unto Chriſt. You ſhall find, that the Father in many things infinitely ſets up Chriſt above all things in the world: he choſe Chriſt before all things in the world. For inſtance: *firſt*, the Father gives Chriſt the preheminence of his affections, his love and his delight. There is nothing in the world, the Father loves and delights in, as he doth in his Son. All the delight the creatures have from the Father, are but beams from the ſun of righteouſneſs, in the eyes of God. That Chriſt hath more abundance of the Father's love, than any creature in the world hath, I will give you but one paſſage or two, for the clearing of it. Look into *Prov.* viii. 30, 31. By the way, you muſt note, *firſt*, that wiſdom, ſpoken of in this chapter, is generally underſtood by all, to be Chriſt alone; and that which is in-

deed affirmed of wiſdom, can be affirmed of none but Chriſt. Among other particulars, note theſe two, to manifeſt it is Chriſt, and that he hath that choice affection of the Father: *I was ſet up*, (ſaith *Wiſdom* here) *from everlaſting*. I was ſet up from everlaſting: none was everlaſting but the Father to ſet him up; none could be everlaſting but the Son to be ſet up. All creatures had their beginning and being in time. Now, obſerve the affection of the Father in this; I was ſet up from everlaſting; it doth properly ſet forth the nature of preheminence. Wiſdom ſpeaks of many things; God did lay the foundations of the earth, made the ſea, and ſeveral creatures; but I was ſet up from everlaſting; as much as if he ſhould ſay, theſe have their place in the world, but my place is above them, in the affection of God. And, that this ſetting up is meant of God's affection to Chriſt above any creature in the world, mark what he ſpeaks in verſ. 30. *Then I was by him, as one brought up with him; I was daily his delight, in the habitable parts of the earth; I was by him as one brought up with him*; the meaning is, Chriſt is here conſidered as the darling of the Father. All the creatures in the world are brought up by God, in a large ſenſe; but he was brought up with him, that is to ſay, he was the very fondling of him. When *Abraham* had an *Iſaac*, *Iſaac* muſt be brought up with *Abraham*, and *Iſhmael* muſt be ſent abroad; *Iſhmael* ſhall have a portion, but ſhall not be brought up with him. This ſhews the difference of affection to one before the other.

other. Bringing up with him is an argument of affection; *I was brought up with him, I was daily his delight:* He made the creatures, but Chriſt was his only delight; that is, he could not look upon any creature in the world, and delight in it, but this delight he had in his Son, did ſwallow up the delight he had in any creature. In brief, the love and delight of the Father hath ſuch a preheminence in the Son, that the truth is, there is no creature in the world doth actually participate of one jot of the love of the Father, but by the Son, and for the Son's ſake; as the Son becomes the channel, or rather the ſpring, that receives from the ocean of God's love. That love the creature participates of, it participates of it by Chriſt; you know, when we partake of ſweet ſtreams that run in rivers and channels, we are beholding to the ſpring for the ſtream; and what the ſpring receives, that it conveys to the channel, from the ocean. The heart of God, as I may ſo ſpeak, is the ocean, the firſt riſe of all love to the creature; Chriſt is the ſpring that firſt receives from him, and then through him is all love diffuſed to the creature.

You know, that by nature we are children of wrath, ſubjects of the hatred and diſpleaſure of God, being at enmity with God; how do we partake of God again? *God is in Chriſt*, ſaith the text, *reconciling the world unto himſelf:* ſo that this uniting again to the Father, in the participating of the love of the Father, comes again in Chriſt; *You that ſometimes were afar off, hath he made*

made nigh by the blood of Chriſt: afar off, in reſpect of the affection of God, in regard of our ſinful nature; but made nigh, that is, reduced again into the affection of God by the blood of Chriſt[u]. Here is the preheminence of Chriſt above the creature, he hath infinitely more of affection; he is the ſpring and fountain of that affection that the creature partakes of. Now, then, we are to give this preheminence unto Chriſt, that reveals this unto us, that ſo we may ſee the pattern according to which we are to walk, and do likewiſe. We ſhould ſo make Chriſt the choiceſt in our affection; we can never place love and affection more orderly, than by placing affection according to the pattern God ſets; ſo far as we affect according to God, and imitate him in affecting, ſo far are our affections placed aright: to put the cart before the horſe; to affect things of lower degree, above things that are higher; to give preheminence to things that ſhould come behind, and to bring that behind that ſhould have preheminence, is the diſorder of man's affection; it ſwerves from the pattern and example of God himſelf. So then, Chriſt hath the preheminence over all perſons with us, when he is really promoted and exalted above all creatures in the world in our affection: *Whom have I in heaven but thee?* ſaith *Aſaph*; *I deſire nothing in the earth in com-*

[u] This muſt be underſtood, as the Dr. explains it, of the open participation and enjoyment of the love of God, and not of the ſecret love of God, and the cauſe and origin of it, which is his own ſovereign will, and not the blood of Chriſt.

compariſon of thee. Here is the preheminence of affection given unto Chriſt, when there is nothing in the world in the affection comparable unto him. You ſhall ſee the like in the *Canticles*, v. 9, 10. the church diſcourſing about her beloved, the ſtrangers aſk her, *What is thy beloved, more than another beloved?* ſhe anſwers, *My beloved is the chief of ten thouſands.* Here is the preheminence aſcribed. When the people of *Iſrael* heard *David* ſay, he would go to war, they fall upon him with *Thou art more worth than ten thouſand of us.* Here was the preheminence given to the king. So, I ſay, when in affection Chriſt is promoted as the chief among ten thouſands; nay, let all things in the world be ſet with Chriſt, they are traſh to him; then, I ſay, is given a real preheminence unto Chriſt, when, in affection, in regard of the excellencies of Chriſt, he is ſet above every thing in the world.

Secondly, The Father gives Chriſt this preheminence beſides; namely, in a far more enlarged and multiplied proportion of gifts and parts above all creatures. Chriſt is the *Benjamin* of his Father, whoſe meſs is more than five times as much as all the reſt of the brethren. The apoſtle, *Phil.* ii. 9. tells us, *That God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name*; and in *Heb.* i. 9. he hath anointed his Chriſt, *He hath anointed him with the oil of gladneſs above his fellows.* You ſhall find, that God promotes Chriſt even above angels; *Heb.* i. and ii. inſiſts mainly upon this point, in how many reſpects God exalts

alts Chriſt above angels; *To which of his angels ſaid he at any time, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?* But, I ſay, principally in reſpect of parts and gifts, you ſhall find, that that which God beſtows upon Chriſt, is far more than he beſtows upon any creature. In *John* iii. 34. it is ſaid, *God giveth not the Spirit by meaſure unto him*; we receive drop by drop of that we have; we have it but ſcanty, to that which Chriſt hath; he hath received the Spirit not by meaſure. The truth is, Chriſt receives a proportionable gift as head; now a head not only requires to have what ſhould ſupply itſelf of ſpirit, but ſuch a proportion as is ſufficient to ſupply all the parts, from the head to the foot; therefore, it muſt needs have more than the ſeveral parts themſelves; we need no more than for our own ſuſtentation. Chriſt is our head, and therefore as a head muſt have the preheminence; that is, a larger proportion of gifts than others; for others are but to find for themſelves, but he is to maintain himſelf, and to maintain the whole body too. Thus ſhould we give Chriſt the preheminence, to which the Father hath exalted him above creatures, giving unto him more than unto creatures; nay, giving unto creatures all they have by him; I ſay, ſo ſhould we give him the preheminence likewiſe. Whither ſhould a creature go for water, but unto the ſpring? whither ſhould the creature go for ſtrength, but unto the fountain of ſtrength? Is it not a derogation unto Chriſt, that all fulneſs ſhould be in him alone, and we forſake this foun-

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tain of fulneſs to go unto broken ciſterns that will hold no water? Mark it well, as often as ever you run to any creature in any neceſſity or exigence, either before you go to Chriſt, or inſtead of going to Chriſt; ſo often you rob Chriſt of that preheminence that God hath given unto him, and you ſhould give unto him. If any creature in the world ſeem in your fancy to have a helpfulneſs, a likelyhood of ſtrength, and of ſupply; and this likelyhood of ſupply ſeems more likely than one from Jeſus Chriſt; ſo far is the preheminence of Chriſt brought down, and the creature hath gotten a preheminence above him. Look to it, beloved, while you run to the creature, to the world, for this, and that, and t'other thing, and think it muſt come this way, or it will never come, Chriſt is wholly neglected of you: and you that are of a more ſpiritual ſtrain, that when you are under any trial, run to any grace, or temper of ſpirit in you, or any qualifications, or any performances you can tender; and look after them, as the thing that moſt likely will furniſh you with what you want, while you look faintly and coldly upon Chriſt, and the freeneſs of that grace that Chriſt brings along with himſelf; ſo long you deny unto Chriſt the preheminence of thoſe parts and gifts God hath given unto him above other things. If God had given unto any creatures more than unto Chriſt, you might rather have ſought unto them than unto Chriſt; you might rather look wiſtly for ſupply in them than in Chriſt; but if Chriſt hath more than any creature

ture in the world; nay, if Chriſt be made the ſole and only fountain of ſupply, whether for the ſpirits, or the outward man; then muſt he have this preheminence to be ſought unto rather than any thing in the world, for the furniſhing of you, and ſupplying you with that, that muſt come from this fountain.

Thirdly, The Father gives Chriſt this preheminence to be the foundation to bear up all things: the apoſtle tells us, *Other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Cor. iii. 11. and in *Heb.* i. 2. ſpeaking of Chriſt, *As the brightneſs of the Father*; he ſaith alſo, *That he doth uphold all things by the word of his power:* God then gives to Chriſt this preheminence to be the foundation. The creature therefore robs Chriſt of his preheminence, when Chriſt muſt not be the foundation to bear up all things, but other foundations ſhall be laid; as if there were a firmer or ſecurer bottom to bear up, than Chriſt himſelf. In *Iſa.* xxviii. 16. you ſhall ſee what preheminence the Father gives unto Chriſt as the foundation; *Behold*, ſaith he, *I lay in* Sion *for a foundation, a ſtone, a tryed ſtone, a precious corner-ſtone, a ſure foundation:* St. *Peter* hath an addition hereunto, in *Peter* ii. 4. 5. *An elect, precious ſtone, a living ſtone, unto whom coming, ye as lively ſtones are built up a ſpiritual houſe.* Mark what preheminence he hath given to Chriſt, to be ſuch a kind of foundation to uphold all things.

To give a touch of theſe things: *firſt*, he is a ſtone,

ſtone, the firmeſt bottom in the world, for the ſecurity of that which is laid upon it from ſinking: give Chriſt this preheminence too. Beloved, look unto him, and conſider him as a ſtone, an immoveable rock; ſuch a rock as you may ſit down with this confidence, that though heaven and earth ſhake and come together, whatſoever is laid upon him ſhall never totter.

He is a *tried ſtone*, ſaith the text, that is more than barely a ſtone. You know what preheminence thoſe medicines have, that have *probatum eſt* over-written; that is an approved medicine, and, upon trial, found to be good. You know what preheminence that armour of proof hath, when a muſket is diſcharged upon it, and the bullet pierceth it not; this is of preheminence above others: Chriſt is *a tried ſtone*, there is a *probatum eſt* written over the head of this ſtone; he was tried by the Father, he is tried by believers, he is tried by his enemies; and a *probatum eſt* is written over his head, that he is a ſtone with a witneſs: tried by the Father, firſt, in his ſecret council; he found that nothing in the world could ſtand under that buſineſs which was to be done; he was tried by him on earth, he laid all the ſins of the men upon the earth, upon him, and yet they could not make his back to break; here he was tried, he made him a butt for all his wrath, the whole quiver of his envenomed arrows; yet he ſtood to it: he was tried by believers; they have put him to it to the utmoſt: he is tried by his very enemies, who find him a grindſtone to grind them

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to powder; and a bulwark of ſecurity for all ſuch whom they oppoſe.

He is not only a tried ſtone, but *a precious tried ſtone*, ſaith the apoſtle, that is more; he gives him this preheminence, to be a precious ſtone. You know, when the Holy Ghoſt ſets forth the glory of the church in the *Revelations*, under the name and title of ſuch and ſuch precious ſtones, of which the foundation, the gates, and the walls were made, it is ſet forth in way of excellency, that they are precious ſtones; here, I ſay, is preheminence, that Chriſt is a precious ſtone, as well as a tried ſtone; precious to God, nothing ſo delectable as what he doth; precious to believers, precious in reſpect of his beauty; (no beauty like his) precious in reſpect of his value; nothing of worth comparable to him; *The fruit of the body for the ſin of the ſoul, thouſands of rams, and ten thouſand rivers of oil*, come not near in value to the ranſom of the ſoul; but Chriſt hath ranſomed it, and is raiſed from the grave. All the creatures in the world, gathered up together, could never make up a ſum to buy out the ſoul; therefore he is precious, precious in value and worth: all receipts in the world ſpend out their vertue, and are dry things, to the virtue and excellency of Chriſt: ſuch is the vertue that is found in Chriſt, that let him but come and lay his mouth to the foot, where the thorn is, he draws out the thorn; nay, he lays his mouth to the plague-ſore of the ſoul, and he ſucks out the venom; it is true, he drinks his own bane; for the preſent, it coſts him his life; but he ſucks

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out the poiſon from the perſon that makes uſe of him. There are many precious ſtones, they ſay, that are of admirable vertue, but yet none is compared unto Chriſt. He is *a ſure foundation*, ſaith the prophet, that is more; not only precious, but ſure; ſo ſure, that lay what load you can lay upon the back of Chriſt, he ſtoops not; and, therefore, he was excellently typified by thoſe brazen pillars in *Solomon*'s temple; they were made of braſs, on purpoſe to ſhew their ſtrength, whereon the whole weight of the porch of the temple lay. Chriſt hath this preheminence given unto him of the Father, that although an infinite weight were to be impoſed upon him, yet he ſhould go away with all. And, in this regard, *Sampſon* was a type of him, who, being barred up in the city among the *Philiſtines*, takes the gates of the city, and carries them up into a mountain, and there lays them: he is ſo *ſure a foundation*, that lay the load of all the ſins you ever committed; lay the load of all the ſins of all the people that ſhall be ſaved by him, yet he ſtoops not; theſe break him not, he will carry them away as eaſily as *Sampſon* the gates: add, to that, the load of all your duties and performances, and buſineſſes in the world; lay all upon Chriſt, he will do all for you. But, muſt not we do them? (ye will ſay) Yea, he will do them for you, and in you: *firſt*, he will do them for you, namely, in fulfilling righteouſneſs in his own perſon, which he preſents to his Father, as that righteouſneſs whereby believers ſhall be juſtified before the Father. As he doth all *for* them,

ſo he doth all righteouſneſs *in* them. Your duties are as the duty you do to a deceaſed friend; you think it is the laſt duty, you ſhall do for him, to carry him to the grave; though, you may have bearers, you ſhall go under the corps, but the bearers ſhall have all the weight upon their ſhoulders, ſo that you go eaſy, in reſpect of the aſſiſtance of the bearers: all the duties we have to do, may ſeem weighty; this is a hard ſaying, and that is a hard ſaying, who can obey it? But, know, that the Lord Chriſt, is ſuch a pillar, ſuch a bearer, to take all the weight of duties upon his back, that he carries the burthen; and ſo carries it, that you ſhall go but as the friend of the corps, the burthen ſhall be off from your ſhoulders. In all duties God calls for of any perſon, the ſtrength of Chriſt is made perfect in the weakneſs of him that is to do them. Chriſt takes not men ſimply from doing, but he takes away the heavineſs and the taſk. We look upon duties as a yoke and burthen; but mark what Chriſt ſaith, *Take my yoke, for it is eaſy; and my burthen, for it is light.* How can this be, that it ſhould be a yoke, and yet eaſy; a burthen, and yet light? It is a yoke and burthen in itſelf, to any perſon that carries all himſelf, without Chriſt; but eaſy and light when Chriſt bears the weight of it. Again, add to this, He is ſo *ſure a foundation*, that, beſides duties, lay all your burthens upon him, his back is broad enough to ſuſtain all; the burthen of your ſpirits, the burthen of your outward man, all the burthens of the church in general, while ſhe is under the greateſt

greateſt calamities: Chriſt, I ſay, is *a ſure foundation* to bear all theſe; to bear the burthen of all the cares of all the people of God; *Caſt your care upon him, for he cares for you*, ſaith the apoſtle. Finally, he is *a ſure foundation*; commit all your comforts unto Chriſt, he will uphold all your comforts, he will renew them and enlarge them.

Beſides, he is an *elect ſtone*, ſingled out by God himſelf, for this very office, in reſpect of his excellency and uſefulneſs, to have the preheminence, and as he is elected unto it. This imports, it is God's own act that Chriſt ſhould have ſuch a preheminence, to be the foundation. Beſides, as it is the act of God, ſo there is a certainty that God himſelf muſt be drawn dry, before Chriſt ſhall, or be left any jot unable to do that which is impoſed upon him: look, therefore, what God himſelf, in heaven, is able to do, as he is God; all this is Chriſt made able to do, by him that ſends him about this employment: ſo that he muſt be ſpent, before Chriſt ſhall be dry. If a father hath a child, that he prizeth as his own life, a ſlave in the gallies, he will ſend the ranſom of his ſon to the gallies; he will ſpend all that ever he hath, rather than his ſon ſhall not be redeemed. There is no wiſe man ſends a ſervant about any employment in the world, but he furniſhes him thoroughly to diſpatch that buſineſs about which he ſends him: it is a vain thing for a maſter to ſend a ſervant for five pounds worth of any thing, and not give him ſo much money. Doth God ſend Chriſt into the world to redeem ſinners, to ſuſtain the burthen of

ſins, and not furniſh him to do the work he ſends him about? He might as well have kept him at home, if he did not furniſh him thoroughly, that he might diſpatch it.

Finally, He hath ſuch a preheminence, as to be a living-ſtone, and ſuch a living-ſtone, as makes all ſtones living that come near him. Here is the preheminence Chriſt hath; of the loadſtone you obſerve, all iron or ſteel that comes near it, it draws all to it, and communicates, of its own vertue, to the iron it draws: this is moſt like to Chriſt; Chriſt is ſuch a loadſtone, that he draws many after him; and, as he draws them after him, ſo he communicates his own vertue to them: ſo that now, as he is a living-ſtone, he communicates life to them, though they were dead in ſin: and not only ſo, but he communicates a power to them, to make other things lively. You have an obſervation, when once a knife is touched with a loadſtone, it will draw another: it is moſt certain Chriſt hath this vertue to draw ſouls to himſelf, and when he draws them, they partaking of life from him, he gives unto them to be inſtruments of life unto others: *When thou art converted*, (ſaith Chriſt to *Peter*) *ſtrengthen thy brethren.* Now, ſeeing Chriſt hath all this preheminence given unto him by the Father, to be ſuch a foundation to bear up all things, let us give him this preheminence to lay all upon him, and not upon any thing elſe whatſoever: and ſo far as we do lay all upon *this ſtone, this tried ſtone, this precious corner ſtone, this ſure foundation, this elect corner ſtone, this living-ſtone*;

ſtone; ſo far as we will venture all upon him, we ſo far give him the preheminence: but, if we will be ſetting buttreſſes to the houſe that is built upon a rock, what is this but a diſparagement to the foundation? If the foundation be firm and good, wherefore then ſerved buttreſſes? It is apparent the houſe will ſink, when it cannot ſtand alone without them: ſo far as you ſet up any props unto Chriſt the foundation, that is to bear up all by himſelf, ſo far you diſparage Chriſt; ſo far you bring him down, and give him not the preheminence. I ſee the time ſteals away. There are many particulars, wherein I ſhould ſhew you how you may give the preheminence unto Chriſt. But I muſt haſten.

Conſider, briefly, why ſhould Chriſt have the preheminence? Why ſhould not other things ſit cheek-by-jole with him[w]? I anſwer, Becauſe it is the good will and pleaſure of the Father he ſhould have the preheminence. What is the reaſon *Joſeph* muſt be the chief man in *Ægypt*? *Pharoah* will have it ſo. What is the reaſon that *Mordecai* muſt be led through the city with pomp and triumph, and *Haman* lead the horſe, when *Mordecai* was counted a ſlave to *Haman*? Why, king *Ahaſuerus* will have it ſo. And, if God will have it ſo, it muſt be ſo: if there were no other reaſon, but God the Father's will, we, that are ſubjects, ſhould yeild to the Father his own will, and give that honour to him, whom he will honour: *What ſhall be done to the man whom the king will honour?*

[w] Side by ſide, or in equality with him.

Thus ſhalt thou do to him, Let the royal apparel be brought which the king uſeth to wear, and the horſe that the king rideth upon, and the crown-royal which is ſet upon his head; and let this apparel, and horſe, be delivered to the hand of one of the king's moſt noble princes, that they may array the man withal, whom the king delighteth to honour, and bring him on horſe-back through the city, and proclaim before him, Thus ſhall it be done to the man whom the king will honour, Eſther vi. 8, 9. As much as to ſay, Thoſe the king honours, the people muſt honour with him: ſo, if God the Father will honour the Son with a preheminence upon earth, his will muſt be a law to us; we muſt honour him with that preheminence, becauſe he will have it ſo.

Secondly, Chriſt muſt have the preheminence above all other things in the world, as he is born unto it; he is heir of all things. You know, it is the right of the heir to have the inheritance, or, a double portion above his brethren; Chriſt therefore being the heir of the world, the firſt begotten of the Father; nay, the only Son; it ſtands with nature, he ſhould have the preheminence above a younger brother.

Thirdly, Chriſt hath bought this preheminence; he hath paid for it to the uttermoſt value of it. He that buyeth a lordſhip, it is fit he ſhould be lord of the manor; it is not fit any inferior tenant ſhould be above him, as long as he hath purchaſed and given a price for it: Chriſt hath purchaſed this preheminence, and he payed the Father the uttermoſt farthing; *He beheld the travail*

vail of his ſoul, and was ſatisfied with it; and therefore he ought to have it.

Fourthly, Chriſt ought to have the preheminence of all things, in that he alone is able to manage this preheminence. You know there are many favourites in ſtates ſometimes, that have the doing of all buſineſſes of ſtate, in reſpect of the favour of the prince; but the ſtate comes to ruin, and they alſo, if they be not able to manage the ſtate. If any creature in the world ſhould have the preheminence given to him to manage all affairs in the world, but Chriſt himſelf; certainly, it would prove to the world, as the poet feigned it did by the ſon of *Phœbus*, that went about to drive the chariot of the ſun: *Phœbus* could manage the ſame in order; but *Phaeton*, a novice, a ſtripling, an ignorant fellow, comes in; he ſteps up to rule the ſun, and the whole world is ſet on fire: I ſay, it would be ſo at leaſt with the world, if any creature ſhould have the preheminence to manage the affairs of it. Look to the wiſeſt man in the world, and moſt able to manage the affairs of the world; yet he hath ſo many irons in the fire, ſome of them burn for want of looking to: therefore Chriſt ſhould have the preheminence, becauſe he can go through ſtitch with whatever buſineſs he undertakes.

Fifthly, Chriſt ſhould have the preheminence in all things, becauſe he hath beſt deſerved it at our hands: we uſually honour thoſe people to whom we are moſt bound; according to the kindneſs received, ſo is our exalting of the perſon. Now,

what creature in the world comes near to Chriſt in loving kindneſs and deſert at our hands? Where had we been, had not Chriſt ſtept in between us and the Father to make peace with the Father for us? Oh! what a fearful account ſhould we have come unto at the great tribunal of the Lord, had not Chriſt before-hand cancelled all that God could charge us withal, and blotted out our tranſgreſſions, and preſented us without ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing, in the ſight of God; *In him you live, move, and have your being*; by him you have acceſs to the throne of grace, thro' a new and living way: all you have, and all that you are, all that you hope for hereafter, come only from this fountain, this Chriſt, who hath purchaſed all of the Father for you. If any creature in the world can do theſe things for you, let the creature be exalted above him; but if he leave all the creatures of the world behind, and out-ſtrip them; good reaſon there is, according to his deſert, he ſhould have the preheminence. The apoſtle, conſidering the infinite deſert of Chriſt to be exalted by men, breaks out into this vehement expreſſion, *If any man love not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, let him be accurſed with a great curſe*, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. ſo deſerves this Chriſt at the hands of man.

Now for application of it: is it Chriſt's due to have the preheminence? then bring down every thing that exalts itſelf above Chriſt; rear and ſet up the thrown-down and dejected Chriſt in you; you that have exalted the world, and made it your god,

god, bring down this idol, grind it to the duſt, ſet up the Lord Chriſt; if you will have any thing in the world, let Chriſt hear of it. When men would have any thing of a king, they never go to the ſcullion in the kitchen; but to the favourite, by whom the king hath declared he will deliver things. When the people came to *Pharaoh*, he ſends them to *Joſeph*, as *Joſeph* ſaid, he would do; ſo, I ſay to you, would you have any thing of God, go to Chriſt, go by Chriſt to him. If you come in any other name in the world, if God anſwers you in that you would have, he anſwers you with a curſe: *This is my beloved Son, hear him*; as he will direct you, ſo you ſhall ſpeed: if Chriſt ſay, your ſins are forgiven, they ſhall be forgiven; if Chriſt will make a deed of gift to you, of liberty from bondage, of grace, or of glory; if Chriſt hath once paſt the deed, the Father will under-write to it and ſubſcribe it; *If the Son make you free, then are you free indeed:* for *of his fulneſs we do receive grace, for grace.* In *John* xvii. 2. it is ſaid, *The Father hath given to him power over all fleſh, that he ſhould give eternal life:* As you will have theſe things, go to Chriſt; if you go any where elſe in the world, but to Chriſt, you ſhall go without; they are to be had no where elſe. God hath given him the preheminence; he muſt rule all, he muſt determine, and the Father will yield; *The Father hath given all judgment to the Son, and he himſelf will judge no man. The government is laid upon his ſhoulders:* therefore you muſt go where God ſends you, if you will ſpeed for any thing of him.

Learn

Learn of Chriſt more, let Chriſt be the *Alpha and Omega*; in all things, begin in Chriſt, end in Chriſt; do all by Chriſt, get all by Chriſt.

But muſt not we ſerve in duty, will you ſay?

I anſwer, Ye muſt ſerve in duty and obedience, but look not that that duty ſhould bring any thing; it is Chriſt brings every thing you get; you get nothing by duties: aſſure yourſelves, while you look to get by that you do, you will but get a knock, becauſe of ſo much ſinfulneſs in the duty; but if you will have any good, you muſt get it by Chriſt: your duties you perform, are that wherein you are to walk in the world, and before the world, that you may be profitable to men; but as for getting any thing, aſſure yourſelves, while you labour to get by duties, you provoke God, as much as lies in you, to puniſh you for ſuch preſumption, if not for the filthineſs of the things you perform.

And as you muſt bring every thing down that exalts itſelf above Chriſt; ſo you muſt ſet Chriſt above every thing; know, this will be *the great condemnation, that light*, that is Chriſt, *is come into the world, and men love darkneſs rather than light:* they love to run to other things, and to forſake the light, this will be the condemnation. So far as Chriſt is ſlighted, and other things promoted above him, ſo far you take away the great end for which Chriſt was ſent into the world, which was, *That he might have the preheminence in all things.*

SERMON

SERMON VI.

The New Covenant of Free Grace.

ISAIAH xlii. 6, 7.

And I will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the priſoners from the priſon, and them that ſit in darkneſs out of the priſon-houſe.

THE Lord is pleaſed by this ſweet evangeliſt of the *Jews*, this evangelical prophet *Iſaiah*, to pour forth his own gracious thoughts and purpoſes concerning his dear Son Chriſt; in this chapter eſpecially, he reveals and declares himſelf from the beginning of it.

It is worth the while to mark the coherence, to ſee how theſe words come in.

Firſt, He declares who it is that he ſends into the world for ſuch a buſineſs, by two titles, in verſe 1. *firſt*, he calls him a ſervant, that is, in reſpect of the employment and buſineſs he hath to do, wherein he is to ſerve the Lord: and in reference to this buſineſs, he tells us what he doth, that this his ſervant may diſpatch it effectually,

Behold

Behold my ſervant, ſaith he, *whom I uphold. Secondly*, he calls him his elect, and that in reference to the deſignation or ſeparation of him, the ſingling him out unto this buſineſs. And he doth further amplify the deſcription of him, by the tenderneſs of this elect unto him, *My elect*, ſaith he, *in whom my ſoul delighteth:* here is the deſcription of the perſon; Chriſt is this perſon, as you ſhall hear by and by, whom he thus deſcribes.

In the next place the Lord propounds the great end for which he doth elect this his ſervant, and uphold him, and furniſh him with his Spirit: For he ſaith alſo, *I have put my Spirit upon him*; and the end of it is, *That he may bring judgment to the Gentiles:* here you ſee who he is; how he is furniſhed; and to what end he is furniſhed: *A ſervant upheld, the Spirit put upon him*, to the end, *that he might bring judgment to the Gentiles.*

The Lord proceeds further, and ſhews how this ſervant of his ſhall deport and demean himſelf; after what manner he ſhall carry this buſineſs in the world, *To bring judgment to the Gentiles.* He deſcribes this in two circumſtances. *Firſt*, Chriſt ſhall diſpatch this buſineſs of the Father, not in a ruffling or ſtirring way: he ſhall not make a great noiſe, as men uſe to do, ſounding trumpets before them, when they do any good; but as you have it in the 2d verſe, *He ſhall not cry, nor lift up, nor cauſe his voice to be heard in the ſtreets:* he ſhall go privately about his buſineſs. And, *ſecondly*, he doth illuſtrate the manner of managing and order-

ing

ing this buſineſs, by the tenderneſs of the Spirit of this Chriſt towards thoſe people with whom he ſhall deal; he doth, I ſay, illuſtrate this tenderneſs of his Spirit admirably, in the 3d verſe, *A bruiſed reed ſhall he not break, and the ſmoaking flax ſhall he not quench:* he ſhall not deal roughly or harſhly, but gently and mildly: and yet as little noiſe as he ſhall make, though he ſhall not ſeem to promiſe any great thing by his privacy of deportment and carriage; yet, for all that, in the 4th verſe, the Lord, by his prophet, tells us, that he ſhall be never the further off from performing the buſineſs he takes in hand; *He ſhall not fail, nor be diſcouraged, 'till he hath ſet judgment in the earth.*

And then, in the 5th verſe, the Lord is pleaſed to confirm this, by undeniable arguments, that there ſhall not be a failing in Chriſt to compaſs this great buſineſs; the arguments, I ſay, are ſtrong: *Thus ſaith the Lord, he that created the heavens, and ſtretched them out; he that ſpread forth the earth, and that that cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and ſpirit to them that walk therein:* he is not a mean perſon that undertakes this thing, but the mighty Lord; he that hath done all great things in the world, that have been done heretofore, it is he that undertakes it; and, therefore, there is no fear that it ſhould fail.

Having thus diſcourſed in general, concerning the buſineſs of Chriſt in the world, and the manner of managing it; he comes again with the ſame

ſame thing, and deſcends unto particular inſtances and illuſtrations of what he delivered before, but generally: therefore, *firſt*, In the beginning of the 6th verſe, the Lord is pleaſed to ſhew forth the authority and commiſſion by which Chriſt is authorized unto this great buſineſs; *I the Lord* (ſaith the text) *have called thee in righteouſneſs:* this call is the commiſſion of Chriſt: *No man takes this honour unto him, but he that is called of God,* (ſaith the apoſtle) *as* Aaron *was.* That gives authority to a buſineſs, to be called of God. *Secondly*, He reiterateth the helpfulneſs of God, as well as his call unto it, in the following words, *I will hold thy hand, and keep thee.* And ſo, *thirdly*, he falls in with an explication or interpretation. *Firſt*, How Chriſt ſhall compaſs this great buſineſs which he calls him out unto; he ſhall do it thus, by the Father's *giving of him to be a covenant for people.* *Secondly*, What Chriſt is to do, or the end for which he is called out to be a covenant. Before it was ſaid, *To bring judgment to the Gentiles*; that was his buſineſs in the end of the 1ſt verſe; now he expounds what this judgment is, *It is to open the blind eyes, to bring the priſoners out of priſon,* &c.

There are two main things in the text. The *firſt*, is, The way by which Chriſt compaſſes the great buſineſs of the Father upon earth, and that is, by being *given to be a covenant to the people.* *Secondly*, The buſineſs itſelf, whereunto he is called out, that is, *To open the blind eyes, to bring the priſoners out of priſon.* So you ſee how ſweetly theſe truths hang together.

For

For the words themſelves, there are theſe particulars conſiderable in them. *Firſt*, Who it is that ſpeaks this gracious language in the text; you ſhall find, in the beginning of the verſe, it is the Lord: *Thus ſaith the Lord, I will call thee, and give thee for a covenant.*

Secondly, We may conſider the perſon to whom this gracious language is directed and ſpoken; and that is unto Chriſt; expreſſed only in this place by the name of *thee*; *and give thee for a covenant.* Mark here I pray you, it is not, I will give myſelf; it ſhould be ſo, if the Father had ſpoken to, or of himſelf only: but it is plain here are two ſeveral perſons mentioned, *I*, and *thee*; if there be two ſeveral perſons, then it cannot be God ſpeaking to himſelf; it muſt be the Father ſpeaking to the Son, to Chriſt.

Yea, but you will ſay, It is ſomebody elſe that ſpeaks, and is ſpoken unto.

Nay, but mark in *Iſa.* xlix. where the ſame expreſſions are uſed, that are in the text; and then you ſhall plainly ſee, it is the ſpeech of the Father unto Chriſt, by many circumſtances that will illuſtrate it. In the 5th verſe he begins thus. *And now, ſaith the Lord, that formed me from the womb, to be his ſervant, to bring* Jacob *again to him*; it is none but Chriſt that brings *Jacob* back: *And you that were ſometimes afar off, hath he made nigh by the blood of Chriſt.* And in the 6th verſe, he ſaith, *Is it a light thing that thou ſhouldeſt be my ſervant to raiſe up the tribes of* Jacob, *and to reſtore the preſerved of* Iſrael? Who is it that raiſeth the

the tribes of *Jacob*, and reſtores the preſerved of *Iſrael?* None but Chriſt, who is the Saviour of all that are ſaved. Here he begins to fall upon ſome of the words in the text itſelf. *I will alſo give thee for a light unto the Gentiles, that thou mayſt be my ſalvation unto the end of the earth.* Here it is plain now that it is only Chriſt; for none is the ſalvation of men unto the end of the earth, but Chriſt alone. Again, look in the 8th verſe and you may ſee more of the words of the text: *Thus ſaith the Lord, in an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in the day of ſalvation have I helped thee, and I will preſerve thee, and give thee for a covenant to the people.* Here you ſee likewiſe, that he who is the Saviour of *Iſrael*, is he who is given for a covenant to the people. And in the 9th verſe, *That thou mayſt ſay to the priſoners, go forth; and to them that are in darkneſs, ſhew yourſelves:* ſo here is the ſame thing delivered more plainly, and Chriſt more fully expreſſed. This I have opened more at large, becauſe all I ſhall ſpeak will depend upon the opening of this truth.

Thirdly, In the next place, we are to note, what he ſpeaks unto Chriſt here, even gracious language in reſpect of us. *He will give him for a covenant.*

Fourthly, Note here unto whom the Father gives Chriſt for a covenant; the text ſaith, *Unto the people, and unto the Gentiles*; that is, to *Jews* and to Gentiles, to all ſorts of people.

Fifthly, Note the end and purpoſe for which the Father gives him to be a covenant unto the people; *To open the blind eyes, to bring the priſoners out of priſon.*

So,

So, you have the parts of the text, which afford many excellent truths, and we might ſingle them ſeverally out. But for brevity ſake, I will reduce the whole ſubſtance of this text into one propoſition.

Doct. *The Father is pleaſed to give Chriſt for a covenant to the people and Gentiles, to open their blind eyes, and to bring them as priſoners out of priſon.*

This doctrine, you ſee, is directly the words of the text, adding only that explication, that it is the Father that doth give Chriſt. There is abundance of marrow and fatneſs in this preſent truth I have delivered unto you, more than people uſually can find out in it. We will endeavour therefore to break the bone, that all the marrow may be ſeen, and none of it may be loſt. For this purpoſe, we muſt deſire you to obſerve theſe following particulars.

I. What it is for Chriſt to be a *covenant*, or, *the covenant*.

II. What it is for Chriſt to be given to be a covenant.

III. What it is for Chriſt to be a covenant *to open the blind eyes*.

IV. If time will permit, we will then conſider to whom this Chriſt is given to be a covenant; who they are that may partake of him, given to be a covenant unto them.

I will begin with the firſt of theſe, what it is for Chriſt to be a covenant; and herein will conſider two things.

Firſt, What this covenant is, that Chriſt is unto us. *Secondly*, How Chriſt himſelf is ſaid to be this covenant.

Firſt, What this covenant is, which Chriſt is unto perſons. *Firſt*, A word or two in general concerning the nature of a covenant. The common and uſual manner of covenants, as you all know, is this; namely, a mutual agreement between parties upon certain articles, or propoſitions, propounded on both ſides; ſo that each party is bound and tied to fulfil his own conditions, which if either of them fail in, the other is thereby freed from his part, and the covenant becomes nullified, void, and fruſtrated. You all know, this is the true nature of a common covenant.

There are two ſorts of covenants generally, wherein God enters with men. There are divers particular covenants, but I will omit to ſpeak of them; ſuch as the covenant with *David* to eſtabliſh his throne to himſelf, and to his poſterity; this the prophet *Jeremy* ſpeaks of at large, which I ſhall only touch upon and mention, the rather, becauſe ſome are conceited there was no other covenant made with *David*, but the covenant of grace: *Jer.* xxxiii. 20. *Thus, ſaith the Lord, if you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, that there ſhould not be day nor night in their ſeaſon; then alſo may my covenant be broken with* David *my ſervant, that he ſhould not have a ſon to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites, the prieſts, my miniſters.* This covenant is for the eſtabliſhment of his throne, and this is a dif-

a different covenant from the covenant of grace; that is common to all ſorts of believers, one with another: but I omit that.

There are two main general covenants God enters into with men; the one is called the firſt covenant, the old covenant, the covenant of works; it ſtood upon theſe terms, *Do this, and live.* The other is called a new covenant, by the prophet *Jeremiah*; and, by the apoſtle, in *Heb.* viii. it is called a better covenant, a covenant of grace. As for the firſt, the old covenant, the covenant of works, which ſtood upon theſe terms, *Do this, and live*; it is very probable, if not certain, that Chriſt was this firſt covenant unto men, even the covenant of works; for, however, it be not a covenant of grace, as the ſecond and new covenant is, yet it may, in ſome ſenſe, be called a covenant of grace, in reference unto other creatures; for all creatures are under this tie, to do this; that is, what their part is which God hath impoſed upon them; yet no creature hath this privilege of grace, that in doing this, he ſhould live: the ſun doth his part, he runs his race; yet the ſun lives not in, or upon the performance hereof: brute creatures do their part; that is, the trade they were ſet about; yet they die and periſh, and are no more, when they have done: *What then is man, that thou art mindful of him, or the ſon of man, that thou viſiteſt him?* Pſal. viii. 4. that he ſhould have life, and no other creature in the world, ſeeing there can be no difference in the creatures of themſelves; the difference muſt be in the grace

of God, which makes it that ſome creatures ſhould live by doing, and others not. In *Prov.* viii. 31. you ſhall ſee the ground of this covenant; when the Lord made all things in the world, Wiſdom, which is Chriſt, there tells us, *That ſhe was the delight of the Father, and her whole delight was with the ſons of men:* I ſay, the foundation upon which the difference was built, between man and other creatures, that he hath this covenant by grace, and others not, is this, *All the delight of Chriſt was with the ſons of men:* he himſelf ſingled out the ſons of men to be his delight, as he was the delight of the Father; and, for his ſake, the Father will do more for them, than for other creatures.

But, now, the covenant which the Lord mentions in this place, by the prophet, is not the firſt, but the ſecond covenant; *I will give thee for a covenant to the people:* he means here, not the covenant of works, but the covenant of grace; which covenant is mentioned, *Jer.* xxxi. 33. and renewed again by the prophet *Ezekiel*, in chap. xxxvi. 26. And alſo *Heb.* viii. where you ſhall find both the covenant itſelf, and how, and in what ſenſe, Chriſt is ſaid to be that very covenant unto men. In verſe 6. this is appropriated unto Chriſt, to be his great privilege, to have the ſole hand and managing of this new covenant: *But now* (ſaith the apoſtle) *he hath obtained a more excellent miniſtry, by how much alſo he is the mediator of a better covenant:* and what is this *better covenant?* Mark what follows in verſe 8. *Behold the*

the days come, ſaith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the houſe of Iſrael, *and with the houſe of* Judah; *not according to the covenant I made with their fathers:* for in verſe 10. *This is the covenant, I will make with the houſe of* Iſrael *after thoſe days, ſaith the Lord, I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they ſhall be to me a people; and they ſhall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, ſaying, Know the Lord; for all ſhall know me, from the leaſt to the greateſt: for I will be merciful to their unrighteouſneſs, and their ſins and iniquities will I remember no more:* here is the ſubſtance of the covenant, *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people.*

Now, all that I will note briefly out of all this, ſhall be only one propoſition, wherein you ſhall ſee both a vaſt and comfortable difference between this new covenant, and all other covenants that God made with men; it differs, I ſay, exceedingly, and the comfort lies in the difference, which is this.

All other covenants of God, beſides this, run upon a ſtipulation; and the promiſe runs altogether upon conditions on both ſides: the condition on God's part was, they ſhould live; the condition on man's part was, that he might live, he muſt do this: and mark, the conditions in that covenant were ſuch, that in caſe man did fail to perform his condition, the covenant was broke, and God was free from giving life; which accordingly came to paſs; for man failing in doing, the

covenant was actually broken, dis-annulled, and frustrated, and man lay under the curse of the breach of the covenant in not doing. But in this covenant of grace, to wit, the new covenant, it is far otherwise; there is not any condition in this covenant: mark what I say, and I beseech you hear me with an impartial and unprejudiced opinion. I know I shall go against the strain of some; but, I hope, what I shall deliver, shall be firmly proved from scripture. I say, the new covenant is without any conditions whatsoever on man's part[x]. Man is tied to no condition that he must perform, which if he does not perform, the covenant is made void by him.

The first argument is this, The covenant is called an *everlasting covenant*; and here, in *Heb.* viii. God saith, *I will be merciful to your iniquities, and your*

[x] This, tho' abundantly confirmed by the following arguments is found fault with by some, particularly by D. W. in his *Gospel-Truth*, &c. p. 59. and yet is no other than what some of the most judicious divines have asserted, particularly the famous *Witsius*: "We, says he in *Oeconom. Fœder.* lib. 3. "ch. 1. sect. 8. agree with them, who think, accurately "speaking, that the covenant of grace has no conditions on "our part, properly so called." And elsewhere, he has these words: "This is owned, that this is the true and proper "condition of the covenant of grace, by which it is chiefly "distinguished from the covenant of works, that all righte-"ousness in which the right to life is only founded, is per-"formed by the mediator and surety of the covenant; hence "it follows, this righteousness being admitted, that *no con-"dition, properly so called, can be required of the elect*, by which "they obtain for themselves freedom from punishment, and "a right to life." *Animadv. Irenic.* c. 14. s. 5. And indeed what some call conditions of the covenant, as faith, repentance, and obedience, are no other than parts or blessings of it, which are absolutely promised in it. See *Ezek.* xxxvi. 26, 27. or what the Dr. afterwards calls the fruits and effects of the covenant.

your ſins will I remember no more. Now ſuppoſe there were conditions for man to perform, and ſuppoſe man did fail in thoſe conditions, what were become of the covenant? Man did fail in the condition, whilſt there were conditions before in the firſt covenant, and thereby the covenant was fruſtrated. Man is not now ſo confirmed, but if there were conditions for him to perform, which if he did not perform, the covenant ſhould be broken; I ſay, he is not ſo confirmed, but he might fail in thoſe conditions: nay, if thoſe be the conditions, that ſome men conceive, then he daily fails. And, if the covenant ſtands upon ſuch conditions, the covenant is fruſtrated, ſo ſoon as the conditions are broken. So, I ſay, if the covenant ſtands upon any conditions to be performed on man's part, it cannot be an *everlaſting covenant*, except man was ſo confirmed in righteouſneſs, that he ſhould never fail in that which is his part.

But, you will ſay, There are many conditions mentioned in this covenant; it is ſaid, that there muſt be *a law put in the mind, and written in their heart*, with many other ſuch things.

I anſwer, beloved, It is true, God ſaith, *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts*, &c. But do you find in this, or in any other mention of a covenant, that this is the condition to be performed on man's part; I ſay, that this is the condition of the covenant, and ſuch a condition, that if man perform it not, the covenant is fruſtrated? There is no ſuch thing in the text.

But you will ſay, Conditions, or no conditions, a man muſt have his heart in this manner.

I anſwer, It is true, by way of conſequence, that after we are in covenant with God, he will beſtow theſe things upon us as fruits and effects of that covenant; but, it is not true, by way of antecedence, that God doth require theſe things at our hands, before we ſhall be partakers of the covenant.

Arg. 2. Obſerve, I pray, and you ſhall plainly perceive, that man hath no tie upon him to perform any thing whatſoever in the covenant, as a condition that muſt be obſerved on his part; let the covenant itſelf be judge in this caſe: it plainly ſhews where all the tie lies, and as plainly ſhews that the whole performance of the covenant lies only upon God himſelf; and that there is not one bond, or obligation, upon man to the fulfilling of the covenant, or partaking of the benefits of it. Mark it in *Jeremiah*, in *Ezekiel*, or in *Heb.* viii. read thoſe paſſages over, wherein the tenure of the covenant is contained, and you ſhall eaſily ſee where the tie is, as *Heb.* viii. 10. *This is the covenant I will make with the houſe of* Iſrael *after thoſe days, I will put my law into their minds, and write it in their hearts:* he will put it in, and write it; *and he will be to them a God, and they ſhall be to him a people.* The word *ſhall*, here, is a word of over-ruling; it is a word of power, as if he had ſaid, I will order it ſo: it follows, *And they ſhall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, ſaying, Know the Lord; for they ſhall all know*

know me: how, by their own ſtudy and induſtry? No; ſee *John* vi. 45. and you ſhall ſee that that condition, of knowing the Lord, is to be performed by the Lord; for ſo it is there ſaid, *They ſhall be all taught of God.* Obſerve, alſo, the larger expreſſion of the covenant, in *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25. and there alſo you ſhall plainly perceive, that ſtill all the tie lies upon God himſelf, and nothing at all upon man: *Then will I ſprinkle clean water upon you, and ye ſhall be clean from all your filthineſs, and from all your idols will I cleanſe you: A new heart will I alſo give you, and a new ſpirit will I put within you. And I will take the ſtony heart out of your fleſh, and I will give you a heart of fleſh: And I will put my Spirit into you, and cauſe you to walk in my ſtatutes, and ye ſhall keep my judgments and do them, and ſhall dwell in the land:* and in verſe 29. *I will ſave you from all your uncleanneſs, and I will multiply the fruit of the earth, I will do it.* Where is there in all this, one word that God ſays to man, Thou muſt do this? If God had put man upon theſe things, then they were conditions indeed; but, when God takes all upon himſelf, where are the conditions then on man's part?

Give me leave, I will aſk you but this queſtion, Suppoſe there ſhould be a fault, I make but a ſuppoſition, of performing in this covenant, whoſe were the fault? Muſt not the fault or failing to perform the covenant be his, who is tied and bound to every thing in the covenant, and ſaith, he will do it? If there be a condition, and there ſhould be a failing in the condition, he that undertakes

all

all things in the covenant muſt needs be in fault: but the truth is, theſe particulars mentioned are not the conditions of the covenant, but they are conſequents of the covenant; the main ſubſtance of the covenant is included in theſe words, *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people.* But, *ſprinkling with clean water, taking away a ſtony-heart, and giving a heart of fleſh*; all theſe are nothing but the fruits of the covenant, which is, that God is the God of ſuch a people, and the people are the people of ſuch a God. For by virtue of this union, or uniting himſelf to his people, God doth cleanſe and purge, he doth ſanctify and refine them. As he becomes the God of his people, ſo he purgeth and cleanſeth them. He doth not firſt come to men, and ſay, make yourſelves clean; get you the law of God in your minds; get you the fear of God into your hearts; get you power to walk in my ſtatutes; and when you do this, then I will be your God: if it did run ſo, then here were conditions indeed; but, it runs not thus; all the tie lies upon God's part, to do every thing that is mentioned in the covenant.

But you will object, and ſay, If all lies upon God's part, and man muſt do nothing, then all his life time he may do what he liſt.

I anſwer, You muſt make a difference between doing any thing in reference to the covenant, as the condition thereof, and doing ſomething in reference to ſervice and duty, to that God who freely enters into covenant with you. I ſay only, that

that in way of condition of the covenant you muſt do nothing.

Arg. 3. Nay, the covenant in the actual ſubſtance of it, is made good to a perſon before he can do any thing [y]. The main thing in the covenant is God's being the God of a people, and the model and draught of that, is God's love. The covenant is nothing but God's love to man; God's love to give himſelf to man; God's love to take man to himſelf. Now this love of God is caſt upon man before he can do any thing: before the children had done good or evil, Jacob *have I loved, and* Eſau *have I hated.* Shall I need to tell you that the covenant is then fulfilled in the ſubſtance of it, when men are actually juſtified? When men are juſtified, God hath made good his covenant unto them; he is their God, and they are his people: now where are the conditions of this covenant? Take but notice what the apoſtle ſaith, and tell me what conditions you find in it? *Rom.* iv. 4. *Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But,* ſaith he, in verſe 5. *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, &c.* There are two phraſes here, to ſhew, there can be no conditions to make up the covenant on man's part, firſt, *to him that worketh not*; if there muſt be no working to partake of juſtification, then there is no conditions unto it. And again, if we muſt *believe on*

[y] Chriſt, who is the covenant itſelf, the ſum and ſubſtance of it, muſt be firſt given to a man, before he can do any thing good; for *without* him we *can do nothing*; and faith muſt be given, *without* which we cannot *pleaſe God.*

on him that juſtifies the ungodly; then juſtification is paſt over to a perſon whilſt he is ungodly; now where is the condition of the covenant, while there remains nothing but ungodlineſs in men? But if theſe things muſt be fulfilled as conditions, namely, to change our hearts, and ſuch like; then we are not juſtified as ungodly, but as righteous; and ſo it directly contradicts that of the apoſtle. We muſt therefore conclude, that this covenant, which is then made good when a perſon is juſtified, is conferred and beſtowed on him, before there can be any ſuch thing as a condition in him.

Yea, but you will ſay to me, peradventure though works be not the condition of the covenant; yet, we hope you will yield, faith is the condition of the covenant.

I anſwer, beloved, I beſeech you obſerve me warily in this; for I am now upon a nice point; and I ſhall deſire to go as evenly as the ſcripture will guide me in it. I muſt needs tell you directly, and according to the truth, that, faith is not the condition of the covenant [z].

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[z] This alſo is condemned as an error, by D. W. *Goſpel-Truth*, &c. p. 57. but it is with great propriety and truth here aſſerted; for faith is the fruit of electing grace, the gift of God, the operation of his Spirit, and of which Chriſt is the author and finiſher; and is not of men, or in their power to produce in themſelves, or exerciſe; yea, it is a bleſſing of the covenant of grace, and not a condition of it; or is what men have in conſequence of their being in the covenant, and not as the condition of their entrance into it. And the ſame is acknowledged by many great divines, particularly that excellent writer, often quoted, profeſſor *Witſius*: "The covenant "of grace, ſays he, or the goſpel ſtrictly ſo called, which is "the formula of the covenant, ſeeing it conſiſts in mere "promiſes,

He that believes ſhall be ſaved, he that believes not ſhall be damned. Is not faith here the condition of the covenant?

I anſwer, There is no perſon under heaven ſhall be ſaved till he have believed. This I grant; yet this will not make faith to be the condition of the covenant. For, firſt, conſider faith as an act, our act, and as we do it, ſo I ſay it is a work; our act of believing is a work. If therefore we perform the condition that is a work for the enjoyment of the covenant, then the covenant doth depend upon a work; but it doth not depend upon a work, for the text ſaith, *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly*, &c.

You will ſay, In that text, believing is required to the juſtifying of the ungodly.

I anſwer, An ungodly perſon, after he is juſtified, believes: but you muſt underſtand it, it is not the faith of the man that ſimply and properly juſtifies, but it is that Chriſt in whom he believes; believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly: it is he that juſtifieth, that is Chriſt. It is not believing

" promiſes, properly preſcribes nothing as a duty; it requires " nothing, it commands nothing, no not indeed, believe, " truſt, hope in the Lord, and the like." *Oeconom. Fœder.* l. 3. c. 1. ſ. 18. And again, " Nor does that ſeem to be ac- " curately ſaid, that *faith is a condition* which the law re- " quires of us, that we may be accounted righteous and " guiltleſs with God. The condition of juſtification, pro- " perly ſpeaking, is no other than perfect obedience; this " the law requires, nor does the goſpel ſubſtitute another, " but teaches that the law is ſatisfied by our ſurety Chriſt; " moreover it is the buſineſs of faith to accept of the ſatis- " faction offered to it, and, by accepting, to make it its " own." *Ib.* c. 8. ſect. 52.

lieving that juſtifies. Mark well that phraſe; him that juſtifieth. Juſtification is an act of Chriſt, it is not an act of faith.

But you will ſay, It is an act of Chriſt by faith.

I anſwer, Then Chriſt juſtifies not alone. Is faith Chriſt himſelf? If not, then Chriſt muſt have a partner to juſtify, or elſe faith doth not juſtify, but Chriſt alone doth it. Nay, I ſay more, Chriſt juſtifies a perſon before he believes; for, he that believes is juſtified before he believes; for I aſk you, whether in juſtification a man muſt believe a truth or a falſhood? You will ſay, he muſt believe a truth; then ſay I, it is a truth that he is juſtified before he believes it; he cannot believe that which is not, and if he be not juſtified, that he may believe it, he then believes that which is falſe. But he is firſt juſtified before he believes, then he believes that he is juſtified [a].

But what then ſerves faith for?

I anſwer, It ſerves for the manifeſtation of that juſtification which Chriſt puts upon a perſon by himſelf alone; that you by believing on him, may have the declaration, and manifeſtation of your juſti-

[a] Juſtification before faith, though cavilled at by many, is certain; ſince God juſtifies the ungodly, and ſince faith is the fruit and effect of juſtification, and the act which is converſant about it, and the object muſt be before the act; and beſides juſtification took place at the reſurrection of Chriſt; yea from all eternity, as ſoon as he became the ſurety of his people; and which has been embraced, affirmed, and defended by divines of the greateſt note for orthodoxy and piety, as *Twiſſe*, *Pemble*, *Parker*, *Goodwin*, *Ames*, *Witſius*, *Maccovius*, and others. See my *Doctrine of Juſtification*, p. 36, 37, 38. ---42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47.---50.---54.

juſtification [b]. Mark what the apoſtle ſaith, whereby you ſhall find the true uſe of faith, that is not the condition, without which we receive no benefit from Chriſt; but rather it is the manifeſtation of that which is already done, and received. *Heb.* xi. 1. the apoſtle ſaith, *Faith is the ground of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not ſeen.* I pray you obſerve the apoſtle's expreſſion, there is abundance of light in it. Faith is the evidence of things, it is not the being of things; and it is the evidence of things not ſeen. A man is juſtified, and that by Chriſt alone, but it is not known to him, it is an unſeen thing. Well, how ſhall he ſee this, and know that it is ſo? The text ſaith,

[b] And, indeed, for what elſe can it ſerve, ſince it is neither the cauſe, nor matter, nor condition of juſtification? at moſt it can only ſerve as the hand that receives the righteouſneſs of Chriſt for juſtification, and claims an intereſt in it, and takes the comfort of it: nor does the Dr. ſay, it ſerves *only* for a a manifeſtation, but that it does ſerve ſuch an end; as it is certain it does, as has been own'd by many judicious divines; and particularly the learned *Hoornbeeck* thinks, that the difference between Dr. *Criſp*, and others, may eaſily be made up, by diſtinguiſhing juſtification into active and paſſive; the former is the act of God juſtifying, the latter the termination and application of it to the conſcience of believers; the one is done at Chriſt's ſatisfaction, the other when a perſon actually believes; *this indeed is a manifeſtation of that.*" *Summa Controv.* l. 10. p. 705. And afterwards he ſays, "We don't reject the diſtinction between juſtification as made in Chriſt, and as manifeſted to the ſoul, though in the explication of it, we don't in all things agree." p. 720. And it is the former, and not the latter, that is properly juſtification, as *Maccovius* obſerves, "It is ſaid of God that he juſtifies, *Rom.* iv. 5. and of us that we are juſtified, ch. 5. not that there is therefore a twofold juſtification; for that which is paſſive is improperly called juſtification, and is only the ſenſe of active juſtification." *Vide* πρωτον Ψευδος, *Arminian.* c. 10. p. 120. And what then is this paſſive juſtification, which is by faith, any more than a perception, evidence, and manifeſtation, of what is properly juſtification?

ſaith, *Faith is an evidence*; faith gives evidence to this thing, faith makes it known; by faith we come to apprehend it; by faith we come to rejoyce in it, as we apprehend it to be our own. It is true, indeed, Chriſt hath honoured faith admirably; but let us take heed we do not over-honour it, to give the peculiar reſerved prerogative of Chriſt himſelf unto it: if faith were a concurrent thing with Chriſt, and Chriſt did not juſtify a perſon alone, what would follow? Conſider, when a man is juſtified, he is juſtified from all unrighteouſneſs; and if his faith juſtifies him from all unrighteouſneſs, this thing will unavoidably follow; that that thing which is full of unrighteouſneſs will juſtify a man from unrighteouſneſs; as much as to ſay, a man is juſtified from ſin by ſin.

But you will ſay, Faith is not ſin.

I anſwer, No, faith itſelf is not ſin; but that faith acted by believers is full of ſin; and the fulneſs of ſin in it, makes faith in ſome ſenſe a ſinful faith: and if it be ſinful, how can that which is ſinful juſtify man from ſinfulneſs? What need Chriſt be without all ſin to juſtify a perſon, if any thing elſe could do it that hath ſinfulneſs in it? You muſt either ſay, there is no ſin in your faith, or elſe you muſt ſay, you are juſtified by that which hath ſin in it; yet, I ſay ſtill, as faith is an evidence, a manifeſtation, ſo it may be ſaid to be our juſtification; that we are, in regard of our own hearts, and our own ſpirits, juſtified by faith: but God-ward, as we ſtand actually before him, a diſcharged people from ſin, and ſo conſequently

partakers

partakers of the covenant; as we ſtand thus, I ſay, it is not faith that juſtifies, neither wholly, nor in part; but Chriſt alone freely for his own ſake, conſidering a perſon as ungodly, ſo he juſtifies him.

Beloved, let me tell you, though faith itſelf cannot thus be called our righteouſneſs; yet in reſpect of the glory that God aſcribes to it, that it ſeals to mens ſouls the fulneſs of righteouſneſs, how can you conſider a perſon a believer, and withal ungodly? When men are believers, they ceaſe to be ungodly: but if they are not juſtified till they believe, Chriſt doth not juſtify the ungodly, but the godly; and then that truth which I have delivered, *Rom.* iv. 5. cannot hold current, *That we muſt believe on him that juſtifies the ungodly*; but rather, we muſt believe on him that juſtifies the righteous. But, as I ſaid, we do not believe that we may be juſtified; but we do believe, and truly believe, when we are, and becauſe we are juſtified. So that ſtill it ſtands firm, we are not juſtified, we are not in covenant, we partake not of the covenant, by any condition we perform, till which performance the covenant cannot be made good unto us; but we are in covenant, and Chriſt makes us to be in covenant, for his own ſake, without any condition in the creature, *Shewing mercy to whom he will ſhew mercy*; without any thing, I ſay, the creature is to do, to this end, to partake of the covenant.

In the next place conſider, how Chriſt himſelf can be ſaid to be the covenant. For the text tells

us, that he doth not only give Chriſt that there may be a covenant with men; but, ſaith he, *I will give thee for a covenant:* he himſelf is made the covenant. I anſwer, Chriſt is the covenant three ways. *Firſt*, He is the covenant fundamentally. *Secondly*, He is the covenant materially. *Thirdly*, He is the covenant equivalently.

Firſt, Chriſt is the covenant fundamentally; that is, he is the original of the covenant, the beginning of the covenant. The covenant of grace takes its being from Chriſt. *Adam* was all mankind, as all mankind was in *Adam*, in the loins of *Adam*: ſo Chriſt is the covenant, and all the covenant is, as it were, in the loins of Chriſt, and ſprings out of him: he is the covenant-maker; he is the covenant-undertaker; he is the covenant-manager; he orders the covenant; he is the covenant-diſpatcher; he doth every thing in the covenant; he makes the articles; he draws God the Father, and man, to an agreement unto the articles; *Thy people ſhall be a willing people in the day of thy power*, Pſal. cx. 3. *And God is in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf*, 2 Cor. v. 19. Chriſt brings God down to the terms of the covenant, to yield to them. Chriſt brings man alſo to be willing to it. *Heb.* viii. 6. Chriſt is called *The Mediator of the covenant*. A mediator, what is that? A mediator of a covenant, is a perſon that hath the managing of it on both ſides. A covenant is no covenant till it be concluded, and done: there may be articles, but it is not actually a covenant till both ſides are agreed; ſo there cannot be a mediator

mediator of a covenant till there be one that is able to bring both ſides together, and make up a concluſion. And thus Chriſt is the covenant, or the mediator of the covenant, as he manageth all things in it. *Job* hath an excellent expreſſion, to ſhew forth the ſoleneſs of Chriſt to deal in the covenant between God and men; he makes a bitter complaint, and pitiful lamentation; he knew not how to deal with God, and gives this as a reaſon of it, (*Job* ix. 32, 33.) *For he is not a man, as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him, and we ſhould come together in judgment; neither is there any day's-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.* A day's-man; it is Chriſt that is this day's-man; it is all one with an umpire, or a mediator: he muſt come between, and lay his hand upon us both: what is that? upon God, and us: the meaning is, he that is the day's-man, the mediator, muſt be ſuch a perſon that hath power on both parties that enter into covenant together: he muſt lay his hand upon God; that is, he muſt have power with God, and bring God to ſuch terms as he propounds; and lay his hand upon man, to bring man on; and, when he lays his hand upon both, then he is a mediator of the covenant. And, in this ſenſe, Chriſt is a covenant, as he hath the managing and diſpatching of all the buſineſs of the covenant, from the firſt to the laſt.

Secondly, As Chriſt is fundamentally, ſo he is materially, the covenant; Chriſt himſelf is the covenant, as he is Chriſt. This ſeems ſtrange; but there is an admirable wiſdom of God to be

adored in this thing: the covenant ſubſtantially ſtands in this; *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people.* Now Chriſt he is both theſe in himſelf; he is God unto his people, and he is the people unto God, and before him. Both theſe meet in that one Chriſt, and are both of them admirably illuſtrated to us, *Matt.* i. 23. where, upon the birth of Chriſt, the angel ſaith, *They ſhall call his name* Immanuel; *which, being interpreted, is God with us:* Chriſt is, *God with us*, not only as Chriſt's Godhead did take the human nature ſimply; but Chriſt is *God with us*, that is, Chriſt is ſo ordered by the Father for men, that the Father may ſee the deity and humanity made up in one, to wit, Chriſt's perſon; and ſo, conſequently, all the people, that are the people of God, are conſidered in Chriſt, as part of him: for Chriſt is conſidered two ways, either as he conſiſts of the Godhead, and one individual human nature; or, as he conſiſts of that and a compact of many perſons conſidered as members of Chriſt's myſtical body: ſo Chriſt is the head, and all thoſe that are in covenant with him, are members; and this head and members together make up one compleat and entire body. Conſider Chriſt thus, and then you ſhall ſee in him God, the God of his people, and men the people of God, and both theſe meet together only in Chriſt.

Chriſt, in a very few words, doth very excellently ſet forth this his own being, materially, the covenant, *John* xvii. 22, 23. *And the glory thou gaveſt me, I have given them; that they may be one,*

as

as we are one. Here, *firſt*, he ſpeaks of unity among themſelves, as members have unity in one body: then he goes further in the next verſe, *I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one*; as much as to ſay thus; I, as I have aſſumed humanity, and beſides the humanity, have aſſumed the members of my myſtical body, ſo I am in them, and they in me; and by this my being one with them, and they one with me, they become one with us both; ſo, God to be the God of his people, and the people to be the people of God, meet both in this one Chriſt, God and man; Chriſt as head united to his members, and they as members in covenant with him.

Thirdly, Chriſt himſelf is ſaid to be the covenant equivalently; I mean thus, Though the main ſubſtance of the covenant be fulfilled to believers as ſoon as they are juſtified, that is, while they are ungodly; yet there are particular branches, or rather fruits of the covenant, to be fulfilled to believers in their ſeaſon: to have God more abundantly pouring out himſelf in all manner of graciouſneſs, this is to be fulfilled in ſeaſon. Now, Chriſt is ſaid to be the covenant, as a preſent pawn, or earneſt, delivered into the hands of a perſon, at the very inſtant of his juſtification; which pawn, is of equal value and worth with the whole covenant, when it is fulfilled to the uttermoſt: ſo, Chriſt being given over to men, as a pawn and earneſt, they have, at the firſt inſtant, the whole covenant equivalently. If a man deliver money to another, and he receives a pawn

worth the money, then he hath the money in his hand, though not in ſpecie, yet in value, he hath as much as the money is worth; and ſo, by conſequence, it is as much as if he had the money itſelf. Chriſt, delivered over in juſtification, is of equal value with all that is to be fulfilled, when the covenant is fulfilled to the uttermoſt. He being of equal value, it follows, that Chriſt is the covenant by eſtimation, though not in reſpect of the accompliſhment and fulfilling of the ſeveral fruits.

Thus I have done with the firſt branch: this I deſired to clear more fully; becauſe I find the world is marvelouſly puzzled with the mixture of other things beſides Chriſt in the covenant: we will go a little further this morning, becauſe I would diſpatch that I intend, and would not willingly leave any thing, not knowing when, or whether ever I ſhall ſee your faces again. I will therefore enter upon the next thing of great concernment: I hope there hath been no miſtake of what I have ſpoken, and then I know the truth of it will juſtify itſelf againſt all contradiction.

II. The ſecond thing is, what it is for Chriſt to be given for a covenant? I anſwer, All that benefit that Chriſt is, or all that Chriſt can be to a perſon, is a meer deed of gift; and it comes only as a very true and real gift unto men, upon no other conſideration, but ſimply the Father's good will, to make a gift of it; this dependeth neceſſarily upon what we ſhewed before. If that which we have hitherto ſpoken be not true, this cannot be

true;

true; if the covenant be with condition, and the condition to be performed for the covenant; then certainly Chriſt is not a meer gift. That which a man buys or pays for, he makes a reckoning of it as due debt; he cannot make a reckoning of it as a gift: but you ſee it plainly in the text, that Chriſt is given to be a covenant; Chriſt is not bought to be a covenant, he is not paid for. Covenants between men I know are thus, if a man has a houſe or land to ſell, there are articles drawn up and agreed upon; and he that muſt have the land, muſt pay for it: it is not ſo in this covenant; but it is as in covenants that are deeds of gifts, which run thus, I will freely beſtow this upon you: ſo God beſtows his Chriſt freely, paſſing him over to men, without any thing from them in conſideration of this Chriſt which is beſtowed. And this imports two things; I ſay, that Chriſt is a gift, imports two things.

Firſt, That in the participation of Chriſt, God requires nothing of man; he expects nothing from man in conſideration of that Chriſt he beſtows upon him. I ſay, he requires nothing, he expects nothing, he will take nothing; nay, he will not give Chriſt unto men, except they will take him freely, without bringing any thing for him.

Secondly, This gift Chriſt, being given unto men, imports that there is no vileneſs, no ſinfulneſs, no kind of wretchedneſs of man, that can be any bar to man from having a full part and

portion in this Chriſt: a gift implies them both. I ſhall open them both, as clear as may be.

Firſt, I ſay, Chriſt is conveyed unto men as a gift; without the Father's requiring any thing of them, or expecting any thing from them; but only barring them from bringing, or thinking to bring, any thing to this end, that they may have a part or ſhare in Chriſt.

I ſhall firſt declare, and make clear, that it is directly contrary to the nature of a gift (conſidered really as a gift) to require, or expect any thing in conſideration of that which is given. When things are paſſed over to a man upon conſideration, either they are paſſed over by bargain and ſale, or elſe by way of bribe. When a man deſires his cauſe may go well in a ſuit of law, he will give the judge ſomething; but the conſideration muſt be, that the judge ſhall carry the cauſe on his ſide; this that the judge receives, is not a gift, but a bribe, becauſe ſomething muſt be done for it. When a man muſt have ſuch and ſuch lands, or ſuch and ſuch goods, and there is a contract, you muſt give me ſo much money, and you ſhall have them; theſe lands and goods are not gifts, when money muſt be paid for them.

If we muſt bring any thing to the Father in conſideration of Chriſt the covenant, then here is a bargain and ſale between the Father and us: I will give you my Chriſt, but you muſt bring me works, to wit, broken, and clean, and changed hearts, and the like: this is a meer bargain and ſale. In *Rom.* iv. 4. you ſhall find plainly and clearly,

clearly, how the apoſtle directly overthrows the being of a gift upon this ſuppoſition; if it could be received, that a man muſt bring any thing to his juſtification, he plainly affirms, a gift ceaſeth to be a gift when any ſuch thing comes in; *Now to him that worketh, is the reward reckoned not of grace, but of debt:* mark, I pray you, well, *to him that worketh*; that is, would you bring your humiliations, your prayers, as conditions that God may perform his covenant? Do you bring any thing in the world, and work any inherent righteouſneſs? Then ſaith the apoſtle, the reward, that is, the accompliſhment of the covenant, is not reckoned of grace; if you bring works, the gift ceaſeth to be a gift, it muſt be reckoned to be a debt. Either then you muſt lay down all works, and let them ceaſe in the buſineſs of partaking of Chriſt, or elſe you muſt conclude you muſt not receive Chriſt of grace, but of debt: and the apoſtle doth make it more clear, *Rom.* xi. 6. *And if by grace*, (that is, by gift, for grace and gift, you muſt underſtand, are all one: grace is nothing but the favour of God freely, and of his own accord communicated; *And if by grace) then it is no more of works; otherwiſe grace is no more grace: but if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwiſe work is no more work.* If you bring grace unto works, or works unto grace; either the one, or the other, or both, are made void: as much as to ſay, theſe two things are inconſiſtent, they cannot ſtand together, that we ſhould partake of Chriſt through grace and works both;

both; they will not ſtand together: grace muſt ſtand alone, or works alone; for one directly overthrows the other.

And, beloved, to ſpeak freely to you of theſe work-mongers, theſe buyers of Chriſt, that would bring ſomething with them to partake of Chriſt; what would they bring? They ſay they will bring a good heart, or a changed life. I aſk, what prize is this you bring? Do you bring any thing of your own, or that which is God's already? Suppoſe your hearts be never ſo purged and cleanſed; what bring you to God? You bring that which already is his own; as much as to ſay, a man owes another a thouſand pounds, and he will come and bring him this thouſand pounds, for lands worth fifty pounds by the year. No, he muſt bring a thouſand pounds more, if he will purchaſe the land: even ſo it is for a perſon to bring works for Chriſt, which works thou oweſt unto God already; no, firſt pay thy firſt debt which thou oweſt, and then if thou haſt any more, bring that unto God to purchaſe Chriſt withal. But alas, when you have done all, you are unprofitable ſervants; for all you have done is not yours, it was due from you before; how then can any thing you do be a conſideration to purchaſe Chriſt withal?

Moreover, you that will bring works, and, in conſideration of them, expect a part in Chriſt; what are the works you bring? A whip you ſhall have as ſoon as a Chriſt, in regard of your works: oh, the filthineſs of all the works of men,

men, as they work them! There is nothing but filthineſs in them; *Yea,* (ſaith *Paul) I count all things dung, that I may be found in him, not having my own righteouſneſs:* therefore, as it is moſt preſumptuous pride in men, ſo it is the groſſeſt ignorance that can be, to dream of any thing that they have, do, or can do, in the partaking of Chriſt; they directly overthrow the nature of a gift: haſt thou but one thought once, that God will accept thee in Chriſt, upon conſideration that thou haſt performed thus and thus; this very thought directly deſtroys Chriſt, conſidered as a gift: for if he be a gift, then he comes without any conſideration whatſoever.

SERMON VII.

The New Covenant of Free Grace.

ISAIAH xlii. 6, 7.

And I will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the priſoners from the priſon, and them that ſit in darkneſs out of the priſon-houſe.

IN the next place, as it is againſt the nature of a gift, ſo God doth not expect, nor will accept of any thing from men in conſideration of Chriſt; and, for this, the ſcriptures are plain and clear, that the Father expects nothing in

in the world of men; no one qualification or ſpiritual diſpoſition, before, or upon the communicating of his Son Chriſt unto men: I will but name ſome few paſſages to clear this to you, that I may not ſeem to come in my own name, in this that I have delivered.

Conſider, among other paſſages, that in *Iſa.* lv. 1. it is plain there, you may ſee, that God looks for nothing in the world of men; be they what they will, be they in the worſt condition, no matter what it is, they are the men to whom Chriſt offers himſelf; *Ho, every one that thirſteth*, (ſaith Chriſt) that is, every one that hath but a mind to come to him, every one that would take him, may have him: *Ho, every one that thirſteth, come to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye ſpend your money for that which is not bread? And your labour for that which ſatisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your ſoul delight itſelf in fatneſs.* Eat, but not buy; for it is ſaid, *Buy without money*; you may eat without price, and that which you ſhall eat is fatneſs. Mark what follows, *Encline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your ſouls ſhall live; and I will make an everlaſting covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of* David: here you ſee the covenant mentioned. But what doth God require here in the covenant? No money, no price; the covenant runs all upon mercy; it is an everlaſting covenant indeed, and an everlaſting covenant of mercy.

Now

Now mercy is the doing a thing only and merely of gift: if a man will forgive a debtor, and aſk nothing of him, then he is a merciful man: ſo far as men give, ſo far are they merciful; ſo far as they ſell, there is no mercy in that. But here is neither money, nor price, nor any thing at all in conſideration of the covenant.

Likewiſe, in *Hoſ.* xiv. 4. God ſaith by the prophet, *I will heal their back-ſlidings, I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away from them*: he will love you freely, that is the term: he will aſk nothing for that good he will do unto you, it ſhall be freely; and what is more free than gift?

Look alſo into that notable place, worthy of all conſideration, *Eph.* ii. where the apoſtle ſpeaks moſt admirable ſweetly to this point, of giving and communicating Chriſt, and all that is Chriſt's, unto men, merely of grace, merely of gift, without conſideration of any thing in the world; and there you have the reaſon, why God will do it merely of gift, and upon no other ground or cauſe at all, (in verſe 4.) ſaying, *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us*; (here is the great principle that gives being to all that follows) *even when we were dead in ſins, hath quickened us together with Chriſt, (by grace ye are ſaved)* Mark what follows, *and hath raiſed us up together, and made us ſit together in heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus: that, in the ages to come, he might ſhew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindneſs towards us through Chriſt Jeſus: for by grace are ye ſaved, through faith, and that not of yourſelves, it is*

the

the gift of God; not of works, leaſt any man ſhould boaſt. Here you ſee how notably the apoſtle takes off all things in the world, whereby men may imagine to move God to ſhew kindneſs, and give his Chriſt unto them; and attributes all to the riches of God's grace, becauſe of that *love wherewith he loved us.* Hence it is that he beſtows Chriſt by grace; *and by this grace are we ſaved, and that not of ourſelves, not of our works, leſt any ſhould boaſt.*

I will not recite many places: one more, and then I have done with this. Look into the laſt of the *Revelations*, you ſhall ſee Chriſt is ſo a gift paſſed over unto men, that God looks for, aſks, requires nothing of men to their partaking of him: in verſe 17. *Let him that is athirſt come, and whoſo will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely.* No matter for bringing of any thing with you; have you a mind to him? take him freely, God ſcorns to make a ſale of his Son. If men take him as a deed of gift, well and good; if they will have him upon other terms, God never means to part with him. I tell you, could you bring angelical perfection and obedience, and preſent that unto the Father as a motive to him to beſtow his Chriſt upon you; if you dare offer the perfecteſt righteouſneſs in the world for Chriſt; I ſay, you ſhall be accurſed for it. *If we,* (ſaith the apoſtle, *Gal.* i. 8.) *or an angel from heaven, preach any other goſpel unto you, than that we have preached unto you*; any other goſpel, than ſalvation, and participation of Chriſt, by grace and free gift (for that

that is the doctrine he had eſtabliſhed before, and, through the whole epiſtle to the *Galatians*, doth maintain) *let ſuch a perſon be accurſed*, ſaith *Paul*. And, concerning thoſe that will preach any other doctrine, or will eſtabliſh any righteouſneſs of man, and pervert the people of God from the ſincerity of the doctrine and goſpel they have received; the apoſtle is ſo eager againſt them, that he breaks out into this expreſſion, *I would they were even cut off, which trouble you*, in the ſame epiſtle, chap. v. 12. and upon the ſelf ſame ground we have in hand, he thus expreſſes himſelf; and, all, becauſe they overthrew the great intent of the Lord, and thoſe great thoughts he hath of himſelf; namely, that the world may ſee what a God of grace he is. If a man comes with works towards the enjoyment of Chriſt, he overthrows the grace of God, and fruſtrates the great end for which God ſent Chriſt into the world: for as you ſee it plainly there in the epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, the place before mentioned, the Lord therefore comes to give Chriſt, to ſet forth *the praiſe of the glory of his free grace.*

Secondly, This gift (Chriſt I mean) given as a covenant, imports unto you, that as the Father looks for nothing in men to partake of Chriſt, ſo alſo it doth imply, there is nothing in men, though never ſo vile, that can debar a perſon from a part in this Chriſt. Some will not have Chriſt, except they can pay for him; others dare not meddle with Chriſt, becauſe they are ſo vile and wretched creatures, that they think it impoſſible that Chriſt ſhould belong to ſuch wretched perſons

as

as they are. You know not (ſaith one) what an abominable ſinner I am; you look upon others, but their ſins are but ordinary; but mine are of a deep dye, and I ſhall die in them: the rebellion of my heart, is another kind of rebellion than is in others.

Beloved, let me tell you freely from the Lord; let men deem you as they will, and make yourſelf as bad as you can, I tell you, from the Lord, and I will make it good, there is not that ſinfulneſs that can be imagined in a creature, that can be able to ſeparate or debar any of you from a part in Chriſt; even while you are thus ſinful, Chriſt may be your Chriſt. Nay, I go further; ſuppoſe one perſon, in this congregation, ſhould not only be the vileſt ſinner in the world, but ſhould have all the ſins of others, beſides what he himſelf hath committed; if all theſe were laid upon the back of him, he ſhould be a greater ſinner than now he is; yet, if he ſhould bear all the ſins of others, as I ſaid, there is no bar to this perſon, but Chriſt may be his portion; *He bore the ſins of many*, (ſaith the text) but he bare them not as his own, he bare them for many. Suppoſe the many, that are ſinners, ſhould have all their ſins tranſlated to one in particular; ſtill there is no more ſins than Chriſt died for, though they be all collected together. If other mens ſins were tranſlated upon you, and they had none, then they needed no Chriſt; all the need they have of Chriſt, were tranſlated to you, and then whole Chriſt ſhould be yours.

Do

Do but obſerve the ſtrain of the goſpel, you ſhall find that no ſin in the world can be a bar to hinder a perſon from having a part in this Chriſt that is given: look upon the condition of perſons (as they are revealed in the goſpel) to whom Chriſt is reached out; and the conſideration of their perſons will plainly ſhew to you, that there is no kind of ſinfulneſs can bar a perſon from having a part in Chriſt.

Look into *Ezek.* xvi. quite through; the perſon is there conſidered in a ſtate of blood, of menſtruouſneſs, of vileneſs, and greateſt filthineſs that can be ſuppoſed; and when *no eye could pity* ſuch a perſon, *or do any good to him*; *I paſſed by thee*, (ſaith Chriſt) *thy time was the time of love, I ſware unto thee, I entered into covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine.* Conſtrue this in a ſpiritual ſenſe, conceive of a ſpiritual eſtate of filth, proportionable to a natural eſtate of filth. That very time of the vileſt of our ſpiritual filthineſs, is the time of Chriſt's love when he enters into covenant. Yea, but ſure the caſe is altered, before Chriſt actually ſwears. No; *then waſhed I thee with water*; *yea, I thoroughly waſhed away thy blood.* When? even then when *I ſware unto thee, and entered into covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine.* Firſt he did ſware, and then he did waſh them; and not waſh them, and then ſware unto them, and enter into covenant with them. Firſt, *I entered into covenant with thee, then waſhed I thee with water, and then put I jewels upon thee, &c.* The firſt he doth, is, he enters into covenant, and the people become

his people, and then he takes them in hand, and waſheth and purgeth them, and not before.

Conſider Chriſt's own expreſſion. *I came to ſeek, and to ſave that which was loſt; I came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance; the whole need not a phyſician, but they that are ſick:* here ſtill the perſons are conſidered in the worſt condition, (as ſome might think) rather than in the beſt. Our Saviour is pleaſed to expreſs himſelf in a direct contrary way to the opinion of men. *I came not to call the righteous, but ſinners:* the poor Publican that had nothing to plead for himſelf, went away more juſtified than the proud Phariſee, that pleaded with God; *I thank thee that I am not ſuch an one.*

Men think righteouſneſs brings them near to Chriſt: beloved, righteouſneſs is that which puts a man away from Chriſt [c]: ſtumble not at the expreſſion, it is the clear truth of the goſpel: not ſimply a doing of ſervice and duty, doth put away from Chriſt; but upon the doing of duty and ſervice, to expect acceptance with Chriſt, or participation in Chriſt, this kind of righteouſneſs is the only ſeparation between Chriſt and a people; and whereas no ſinfulneſs in the world can debar a people, their righteouſneſs may debar them.

I need not tell you, what I have ſo often mentioned, that there muſt be a believing in him that juſtifies the ungodly, *Rom.* iv. what can you look for of

[c] When it is truſted to, and depended upon, and put in the room of Chriſt and his righteouſneſs; or when it is brought to fit a man for Chriſt, and give him a right and claim to him, and his benefits.

of an ungodly perſon? If there can be any bar in the world to hinder a man from taking Chriſt, you would think it ſhould be ungodlineſs; it is the ground of moſt, and all mens fears. But if the term ungodlineſs be not bad enough, conſider, Chriſt goes further, even unto rebellion; he hath received gifts for the rebellious, *Pſal.* lxviii. 18. *Thou haſt aſcended on high, and led captivity captive, thou haſt received gifts for men, yea for the rebellious alſo, that the Lord God might dwell among them.*

But ſome may be ready to ſay to me, Though God be never ſo free in giving Chriſt unto men; yet they may never have a part in him, except they have hands to take, and receive him.

I anſwer, I beſeech you conſider, and I anſwer peremptorily, that though men have no hands to take Chriſt, yet may they receive him. I will clear this a little to you, firſt by illuſtration, or by way of ſimilitude: a poor indigent perſon is ſpeechleſs, he hath never a tongue; he is handleſs, he hath never a hand: he cannot aſk with the tongue, he cannot take with the hand; if you have a mind to give, I aſk, can you not give to ſuch a perſon, becauſe he hath not a tongue to ſpeak, nor a hand to take? you may behold, and ſee the pitiful caſe of ſuch a man, and your compaſſions may be ſtirred in you; and whereas he cannot put a garment upon his own naked back, yet you may provide raiment, and put it upon his back with your hands, as well as if he had put it on himſelf: and thus God deals in beſtowing Chriſt upon men; we are dumb, and cannot

ſpeak, *We know not what to aſk as we ought*, ſaith the apoſtle, *Rom.* viii. 26. but God being rich in compaſſion, he beholds our miſerableneſs; his own bowels ſtir him up. Although there be no language in the creature to move him; yet out of theſe bowels of his, he will ſhew pity and mercy to us, and reach out his Chriſt, to thoſe that have no hands to receive him, no faith to believe in him. It is the Lord puts this Chriſt on the back of thoſe perſons on whom he hath pity and compaſſion. I ſay, that although we have no hand, yet the Lord puts this his Chriſt upon us; it is not we that put him on, but the Lord that puts him upon us.

Secondly, To reſolve the caſe more fully and clearly, obſerve a diſtinction very needful to be obſerved and conſidered: there is a twofold receiving of Chriſt; there is, *firſt*, a paſſive recipiency; *ſecondly*, there is an active recipiency [d].

Firſt, There is a paſſive receiving of Chriſt, and that is, ſo that Chriſt is received without any hands; but in an active receiving of him, he is not received without hands: you will ſay, what is this paſſive receiving of Chriſt? I anſwer, a paſſive receiving of Chriſt, is juſt ſuch a receiving of him, as when a froward patient takes a purge, or ſome bitter phyſick; he ſhuts his teeth againſt it, but the phyſician forceth his mouth open, and pours

[d] And an excellent diſtinction it is; the learned *Hoornbeeck* takes notice of it, and has theſe words concerning it; "Neither do we reject ſome diſtinctions of theirs (*i. e.* Dr. *Criſp*, and others, called *Antinomians*) as of the reception of Chriſt, *primum* paſſivæ, *tum* activæ, firſt paſſive, then active." *Summa Controv.* cap. 10. p. 720.

pours it down his throat, and ſo it works againſt his will, by the over-ruling power of one over him, that knows it is good for him. Thus I ſay, there is a paſſive recipiency, or receiving of Chriſt, which is the firſt receiving of him; when Chriſt comes by the gift of the Father to a perſon, whiles he is in the ſtubbornneſs of his own heart, being froward and croſs; and the Father forces open the ſpirit of that man, and pours in his Son in ſpite of the receiver [e].

There is ſuch a kind of recipiency mentioned in ſcripture, *Jerem.* xxxi. 18, 19. *I have ſurely heard* Ephraim *bemoaning himſelf thus, Thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was chaſtiſed, as a bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke; turn thou me, and I ſhall be turned, thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was inſtructed, I ſmote upon my thigh; I was aſhamed, yea, even confounded.* Mark how *Ephraim* (who is the repreſentative of the church) ſtands

[e] This is to be underſtood of the ſtate and condition, in which a man is, when God comes firſt to work upon him, in which he is paſſive; and the ſimile made uſe of, of a phyſician forcing a man's mouth open, and pouring phyſick againſt his will, is intended to illuſtrate, and does illuſtrate, the enmity and rebellion of the heart of man againſt Chriſt and his grace; and ſhews how diſagreeable, to the carnal mind, are the methods which God takes when he firſt works upon it, either by afflictive providences, or by letting the law into the conſcience, which works wrath there; and not, as D. W. ſuggeſts in his *Goſpel Truth*, &c. p. 101. as if men were ſaid to receive Chriſt againſt their wills: for, as the Dr. after obſerves, when Chriſt has entered into the ſoul, and has revealed himſelf, and ſhewn it his excellency and his beauty, it embraces him, and holds him faſt; when his power comes upon it, it is made willing to receive him, whom, before, it had a diſlike of, and an averſion to.

affected and diſpoſed; when God comes firſt to tame and break the ſpirit of *Ephraim*, God is fain to get upon *Ephraim*, as an horſe-rider is fain to get upon an unruly horſe, that was never broken; he muſt fetter him upon all four, that he may ſtand ſtill before he get up. So God muſt fetter *Ephraim* before he can get up, before he can tame him; *I was as a bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke*, nothing but kicking and ſpurning at firſt; afterwards *Ephraim* becomes more gentle; *When I was converted, I ſmote upon my thigh, and was confounded:* But before, *Ephraim* was a bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke. Hence it is, that the entrance of Chriſt into a perſon is attributed unto the power of Chriſt; *Thy people ſhall be a willing people in the day of thy power*; the power of the Lord muſt over-come a perſon, before Chriſt can have a poſſeſſion of him, in regard of the croſſneſs of the ſpirit of man to the pleaſure of Chriſt.

At the firſt, then, there may be a paſſive receiving of Chriſt, by which Chriſt may enter, and doth enter into the ſpirit, though the ſoul reach not forth the hand to take him in; but rather on the contrary part, fight againſt him by keeping him from entering: but now when this Chriſt is poured into the ſpirit of a man by the power of the Lord, then he begins to work, to break, and to tame the ſpirit, to be at his own beck and pleaſure; when Chriſt hath once revealed himſelf, and made the ſoul behold his beauty, and acquainted it with his excellency, then it begins to embrace him, and to hold him faſt, and will not let him go.

Here comes in the ſecond act of receiving Chriſt, when we take him, perceiving he is a friend and coming for good, and that there is no good but by him. Chriſt is conſidered as given of the Father; and being given, the Father hath no regard to any thing a man can do for him, or any thing he can do againſt him.

But it may be, before I leave this, you will aſk, is not unbelief a bar to have a part in Chriſt?

I anſwer, It is a bar to hinder the manifeſtation of Chriſt in the ſpirit; but it is not a bar to hinder one from having a part in Chriſt, on whom God doth beſtow him. It is true, that you, nor I, can ſay by experience that Chriſt is ours, until we believe; as long as we continue in total unbelief, we cannot conclude to our own ſpirits that Chriſt is ours: But unbelief is not ſimply a bar to the beſtowing of Chriſt, to ſuch a perſon; he beſtows him without any regard to belief, or unbelief: If unbelief ſhould be a bar to hinder Chriſt from being beſtowed upon men, where is the man to whom Chriſt ſhould be beſtowed? There is no perſon under heaven conſidered ſimply as ungodly, and under the notion of ungodlineſs, but he is conſidered as an unbeliever, as well as a ſinner in other reſpects; ſo that to the Father's giving of Chriſt, unbelief is not a bar; only to the inward ſatisfaction of the ſoul and ſpirit, unbelief is a bar; a ſoul cannot be reſolved till it doth believe.

III. And ſo now I come to conſider the third thing I propoſed, namely,

What it is for Chriſt to be given to open the blind eyes?

There are two things very remarkable in it, that he is given to do this: for hence I infer, and the thing itſelf will clearly bear it;

Firſt, That Chriſt is actually paſſed over to a ſoul, and a poſſeſſion of Chriſt is delivered unto perſons, before ever their blind eyes are opened, or they come out of priſon; that is, before they have any gracious qualifications whatſoever; and this is a truth that follows upon the former, that Chriſt himſelf is the firſt ſpiritual gift that the Father doth beſtow upon any, before there be wrought any opening of the eyes, which is the firſt of all gracious qualifications wrought in a man.

Secondly, That the opening of the eyes, and bringing the priſoners out of priſon, is the ſole work of Chriſt; none doth this buſineſs but Chriſt alone when he is once given.

The firſt will need a little clearing (and thereby the ſecond will be ſufficiently evidenced) being a truth of very great concern, and yet ſeldom ſeriouſly conſidered; I ſay, that Chriſt is actually given and paſſed over to men, and made really theirs, before ever there be any gracious qualifications put into the ſoul of ſuch a man. I ſay, as before, obſerve this caution, I ſpeak of God's giving Chriſt unto men, not of the manifeſtation of him unto a man to be his: There is, and muſt be faith, as I ſaid before, for the manifeſtation of him to be ours; but there is no qualification wrought

wrought in the heart of any perſon, before Chriſt be actually paſſed over, and made his in the covenant. Now, I ſay, Chriſt is given and paſſed over to ſuch a perſon, before he has any gracious qualifications; I do not mean, as ſome do, that God did actually decree Chriſt, unto ſuch and ſuch, before he put any qualifications in them; this is a truth indeed; but I ſay further, That God gives actual poſſeſſion of Chriſt, and Chriſt takes poſſeſſion of that perſon, before there be any qualifications wrought in him: now Chriſt is given, not only to perform ſome common acts of God's providence, but he is given as the covenant itſelf; he enters, and actually juſtifies a perſon, before any qualification be wrought in him.

Now I ſhall endeavour to clear this, by all poſſible evidence I can; the ſcripture is plain for it, in *Iſa.* lxi. 1, 2, 3. and ſo forward; there you ſhall ſee that Chriſt is actually given unto men, before any gracious qualifications whatſoever be wrought in them; *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me*, ſaith Chriſt; for they are his words, as he himſelf applys them, in the ſermon he preached, *Luke* iv. 18. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, becauſe the Lord hath anointed me to preach the goſpel to the poor, he hath ſent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of ſight to the blind, and to ſet at liberty them that are bruiſed.*

Obſerve it, I pray you, Here Chriſt hath a buſineſs to do in the world; which is, *To bind up the broken-hearted*; and, the Lord hath anointed him

him to this buſineſs. What is that anointing? The Lord hath ſeparated him, deſigned him to it; and according to his deſignation, places him where he may do it; this is meant by anointing. Now, when a man is ſet apart, and ſent about ſuch a buſineſs; he muſt be there corporally or virtually before that's done, which he is ſent to do; he is ſent to do a thing, therefore he muſt be there where it is to be done: a man is not ſaid to do a thing, when it is done before he come; if Chriſt be ſent to bind up the broken hearted, and if it be his buſineſs; certainly they are not bound up before he comes to bind them; and if he comes to bind them up, then he is preſent before they are bound up.

But, peradventure, you will ſay, by this text, here are broken hearts firſt, before Chriſt be ſent to bind them up; therefore there muſt be broken hearts before Chriſt come to the ſoul.

To this I anſwer, That a broken heart is to be conſidered in a double ſenſe, either, *firſt*, Simply for a heart undone; or, *ſecondly*, For one ſenſible of its own undoing: you know, men are ſaid to be undone, and broke, when their eſtates are broke, and their credit cracked; and, they may be ſaid to be broke, when they have examined their own books, and find that they are, and ſo ſeek to their creditors to make agreement: they may be conſidered as broken, ſuppoſing and conſidering what their condition is ſimply in itſelf, as they are undone in it; or elſe, as they apprehend themſelves to be undone, and ſo make agreement.

Now, theſe two kinds of brokenneſs of heart

conſidered,

conſidered, I anſwer, It is moſt certainly true in the firſt ſenſe, there is a broken heart, before Chriſt is conſidered as preſent to bind it up; that is, men are really undone, before he comes to reſtore them; but theſe perſons are not ſenſible of their own brokenneſs of heart, untill Chriſt comes and makes them ſenſible of it.

Therefore, if you will ſpeak of the ſenſe of breaking, I flatly affirm, Chriſt is actually given, and is come unto the ſoul, before ſenſibleneſs be wrought in the ſoul. Mark but the covenant as it is recited, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 26. who is it deals with the heart of man to take away the ſtoneneſs of it, and to give a meltingneſs unto it? *I will take away the ſtony heart out of your fleſh, and I will give you an heart of fleſh:* who is that? It is he that did obtain a more excellent miniſtry, by how much he was the mediator of a better covenant; even the mediator of this covenant, and it is he that takes away the ſtony heart; and, if he breaks it, how can there be ſaid to be a broken heart, before Chriſt comes to do it?

Therefore, in brief, know this, Chriſt is ſent unto men, as to bind up their hearts when they are broken, ſo graciouſly to break them, when they are hard; firſt, he breaks them, then he binds them up; *He is ſent to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of priſon-doors to the priſoners:* people think by their humiliations, ſorrows, mournings, and obedience, and ſuch like, to get Chriſt; but it is plain that the very ſpirit of mourning is the work of Chriſt upon

on a perſon, and he is preſent to work it too. *Zech.* xii. 10. *I will pour upon the houſe of* David, *and the inhabitants of* Jeruſalem, *the ſpirit of grace and ſupplication: and they ſhall look upon me, whom they have pierced, and mourn:* Who was it that poured this ſpirit of grace, ſupplication, and mourning? I, ſaith Chriſt. I, who was that I? It is he that was pierced, on whom they ſhall look that had pierced him; *They ſhall look upon me whom they have pierced*; this is he that poured out the ſpirit of ſupplication and mourning; ſo, if it be Chriſt that was pierced, as is plain, then it is alſo plain that he poured out the ſpirit of grace, ſupplication, and mourning: how then can they mourn before Chriſt comes, when it is he, after he is come, that doth this thing?

Object any qualification whatſoever, and it will appear moſt evident and plain, that it is Chriſt himſelf, after he is come, that works it; even faith itſelf, which is called the radical grace of all graces, is not given untill Chriſt himſelf be given to men, who works this very faith; *Heb.* xii. 2. *Looking* (ſaith the apoſtle) *unto Jeſus the author and finiſher of our faith:* he is the author; what faith can there be then till he comes to work it?

Conſider, *Pſal.* lxviii. 18. compared with *Eph.* iv. 8. and you ſhall plainly ſee Chriſt is given unto men, before there be any qualifications of any grace whatſoever in them; *Thou haſt received gifts for the rebellious*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt; *Thou haſt given gifts uuto men*, ſaith the apoſtle: put them both together, Chriſt received for, and gave gifts unto

unto rebellious men; conſider, I pray, what gracious diſpoſitions, and qualifications are conſiderable in rebellious men; as they are rebellious, there can be none conſidered: but Chriſt received, for, and gave gifts to, the rebellious; therefore, he is given, and accordingly gives whatſoever any perſon hath, before he hath any thing.

There are many notable arguments in ſcripture moſt abſolutely eſtabliſhing this truth; that Chriſt is given and made over unto men before they have any qualification whatſoever. *Col.* i. 18. where Chriſt is called, *The head of the body, the church, and the beginning*. Theſe two metaphors illuſtrate and eſtabliſh this truth.

Firſt, Chriſt is the beginning. He that is the beginning of all things, is before all things; not only in the being of nature before all things, but actually preſent before all things be begun. He that is the builder of the houſe, doth not come after it is begun to be built; but he is preſent at the place before a ſtone is laid, becauſe he is the man that muſt lay it, he is the beginner of it; and if he be the beginning, whatſoever is begun, is after him that is the beginning.

Secondly, Chriſt is the head. This is the other metaphor, whereby is ſet forth, that Chriſt muſt upon neceſſity be in the ſoul, be actually paſſed over unto men, before they can have any gracious qualifications. A head is the fountain of all animal and ſenſitive ſpirits, and of all motion; without a head, a man cannot hear, ſee, walk, feel, ſtir, nor do any thing, ſeeing all theſe operations come from

from the head. Conſider the body as headleſs, and all the ſenſes are abſent, and without a head nothing is done. Chriſt is the head of his church, (ſo ſaith the apoſtle) that is, he is the fountain of all ſpiritual ſenſe and motion. You may as ſoon conceive that a man is able to ſee whilſt he hath not a head; as to think, a man can have ſpiritual eyes, whether the eye of faith to behold Chriſt, or the eyes of mourning to lament ones wretchedneſs, before there be actually the preſence and conjunction of Chriſt the head, unto ſuch a body. Beloved, to think a man can have any ſpiritual ſight, before Chriſt be actually united to the ſoul, is all one, as for a man to think to ſee, before he hath eyes. The eyes are placed in the head; both the organs, faculties, and ſpirits, all are in the head; how can a man ſee, that hath neither eyes nor ſpirits to feed them? which he hath not, while he hath not a head, where all theſe are planted. Chriſt muſt be the eye, and preſent, to give ſight; therefore, the ſcripture expreſsly ſay, *That he is given for a covenant to open the blind eyes:* if to open them, then they are not opened before he gives them ſight.

And, *Thirdly*, As Chriſt is called a head, and a beginning; ſo alſo life, frequently in the ſcripture. *I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me*, Joh. xiv. 6. Can a man be an active creature, before there be life breathed into him? *The Lord*, (ſaith the text) at the creation, *breathed into man the breath of life, and ſo he became a living ſoul.* He was like a ſtone, till he had

had life: but now, ſaith the apoſtle, *I live, yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me*, Gal. ii. 20. *And, by the grace of God, I am that I am, and his grace that was beſtowed upon me, was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all.* *Paul* was an active ſoul. How? *By the grace of God*, 1 Cor. xv. 10. That is, as a body, without a ſoul, is dead; ſo every perſon, in ſpiritual actions, is wholly dead, till Chriſt the ſoul of the ſoul be infuſed into him, to animate and enliven him.

I ſhall not ſpend more time in urging more arguments; though I might be large to ſhew that Chriſt is the firſt thing given unto us, before all other whatſoever. For if this light be not enough, we muſt wait till the Lord in his time will reveal his truth.

IV. And now in a word or two conſider, who they are, to whom Chriſt is given to be a covenant. All this is good news, will ſome ſay, to thoſe unto whom it is ſent. Many thouſands cry out, oh, but it is none of my portion, nor my portion, that Chriſt ſhould be given as a covenant to me.

I ſhall not be large in this, though ſome may expect it; the text will tell in part, who thoſe are to whom he is given for a covenant, to wit, the people, and the Gentiles, one, as well as another. God gives Chriſt to men without reſpect of perſons, to *Jews* and Gentiles. You ſhall find through the whole courſe of the ſcripture, the perſons to whom Chriſt is exhibited, are ſtill expreſſed in the moſt general terms: if a man would know

know for whom he came, it is anſwered, *He came to ſeek and to ſave thoſe that are loſt*; *in due time, he came to die for the ungodly*; and *came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance*; *and while we were yet ſinners, Chriſt died for us.* The ſcripture runs upon this ſtrain; why then ſhould any man come and cry, *He died not for me, he is not given for me?* Why, art thou a ſinner? He was given for thee, if thou art a ſinner.

The king puts forth a proclamation, and in it he pardons all thieves: what mad or fooliſh thief will ſay, oh, but the king doth not mean me, he may mean others, but not me! Why, he means thieves in general, he excepts none; why ſhouldeſt thou ſay, not me? If there be the name of thieves in general, without particular mentioning of ſome, they will come in, and take their portion. Beloved, ſo Chriſt deals with men, he is given to the people, to the Gentiles; art thou of the people? art thou of the Gentiles? If thou art, why is he not given to thee? Nay, more, it is the people and Gentiles conſidered as ſinners?

But ſome will be ready to ſay, You know he is not given to all people, and all Gentiles; ſome do miſcarry, and poſſibly I may be among them that do miſcarry: but how ſhall I know that I am among the number of ſuch ſinners that ſhall not miſcarry; and my portion is in this Chriſt?

Beloved, here obſerve by the way, now we are ſpeaking of knowing whether Chriſt be mine, or no, not ſimply of Chriſt's being ours, but of his manifeſtation, or of knowing him to be ours, how

how ſhall I know it? You will ſay, There are labyrinths, in which a man may walk, and by hap may chance to hit the right, in the finding of this great truth, ſo much ſearched after, how a man may know whether Chriſt be his or no. To lead you a plain and ſure way; the beſt way for any man to know whether Chriſt be his or no, is to conſider the conveyance in which he is made over to men; ſee the terms of conveyance, and according to theſe terms, ſuch is the ſecurity of your title. Now the terms of conveyance (as I have often told you) are only ſuch as in a deed of gift, and a deed of gift univerſally exihibited and reached out. Therefore, I muſt tell you, there is no better way to know your portion in Chriſt, than upon the general tender of the goſpel, to conclude abſolutely he is yours, and ſo, without any more ado, to take him, as tendered to you, on his word; and this taking of him, upon a general tender [f], is the greateſt ſecurity in the world, that Chriſt is yours. Say unto your ſouls (and let not this be contradicted, ſeeing Chriſt hath reached out himſelf to ſinners as ſinners) My part is as good as any man's; ſet down thy reſt here; queſtion it not, but believe it; it is as good ſecurity as God can

[f] This is the principal paſſage on which the *Dutch* profeſſor, *Hoornbeeck*, has laid the charge of holding univerſal redemption to the Dr. concluding, from this general tender, or offer of Chriſt to all, that he held the univerſal ſatisfaction of Chriſt for all, and that all have an equal portion in it; from whence they might be aſſured of Chriſt as theirs, and not from any condition in themſelves: and, indeed, the univerſal offer, cannot be ſupported without ſuppoſing univerſal redemption; which thoſe, who are fond of, and yet profeſs particular redemption, would do well to conſider. See *Summa Controv.* p. 703. l. 10.

make thee; he hath promiſed, venture thy ſoul upon it, without ſeeking for further ſecurity. But, ſome will ſay, he doth not belong to me: why not to thee? he belongs to ſinners, as ſinners; and if there be no worſe than ſinfulneſs, rebellion, and enmity in thee, he belongs to thee, as well as to any in the world [g]: and there is nothing at all can give thee a certainty he is thine, but receiving of him upon theſe terms; *He came to his own, and his own received him not; but, to as many as received him*, (mark that) *he gave power to become the ſons of God.*

He receiveth ſinners, as ſinners; he never ſhut out one of all thoſe thouſands, that came upon the tender of the goſpel; he never put any by; *But, to as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the ſons of God.* Bring me any one inſtance in the whole book of God, of any one that hath come to Chriſt, and taken him upon the tender of the goſpel, and yet he hath put this perſon by. It is true, in a ſhallow matter, concerning a bodily cure, the woman comes to Chriſt, and, at the firſt, he would not hear, then he calls her dog; yet before they parted, Chriſt not only accepts the woman, but breaks out into admiration, *Oh! woman,*

[g] This is putting it upon a much better foot than the general tender; which is no ſecurity to any, of Chriſt being his; nor even general redemption itſelf, ſince all have not a portion in him, or are ſaved by him; but, Chriſt dying for the worſt and chief of ſinners, and his promiſe to receive, and his actually receiving them as ſuch, are the beſt ſecurity, and on which a poor ſinner, under a deep ſenſe of ſin may rely; and be encouraged to apply to Chriſt, and lay hold upon him as his own Saviour. See the laſt paragraph of the next ſermon, where the Dr. mentions a better ſecurity than the general tender.

woman, great is thy faith! But, I ſay, in the buſineſs of partaking of Chriſt, ſhew me an inſtance of any in all the book of God, that have ventured upon the general tender of Chriſt, which was rejected. If there be no example, in all the ſcripture, from whence fetch you this bitterneſs of your own ſpirits, that you may not, that you dare not cloſe with Chriſt?

But, you will ſay to me, If this taking of him be the beſt ſecurity, how ſhall I know whether I believe or no? Or how ſhall I know whether this my taking is not a counterfeit, but a ſolid, ſubſtantial, real, taking of Chriſt.

I anſwer, By the reality of the thing. Do you it indeed? If you do it indeed, it is a real taking. If a man ſhould aſk you, How do you know the ſun ſhines? The light of it ſhews itſelf, and, by its light, we know it ſhines. How ſhall I know I believe? There is a light in faith that diſcovers itſelf unto men. The ſoul that really cloſes with Chriſt, may conclude he doth. If you give ſixpence to a poor man, and then aſk him, How do you know I have given you it, and that you have it? Why, ſaith he, I have it in my hand, and find, and feel I have it. So, aſk your hearts this queſtion, How do I know I believe in Chriſt? Do I caſt my heart upon this truth? Do I receive it as one that I do believe, or do I reject it, or will not receive it? Then I do not believe: but if you ſit down, and reſt upon it, and receive it, and do in reality believe it; then you may abſolutely conclude Chriſt is yours. In reſpect of time, I cannot

amplify any further: but, I hope, for the preſent, this will give ſatisfaction. A word or two for application, and ſo I will conclude.

Is this a truth, as hath been by ſcripture proved to you, *That Chriſt is given a covenant to men, to open their blind eyes?* Then it is plain, they begin at the wrong end of the bottom, who begin to wind up at the graciouſneſs of their own ſpirits, from thence to have comfort. If you begin at any other end than at Chriſt to get grace and comfort, you do as they do that take the inmoſt end of the bottom of the thread, and begin to ravel there; ſo that little or no work is done, but much and many a knot, and broken ends made, and the work quite ſpoiled; whereas, if they begun at the utmoſt end of the bottom, it would have run without diſturbance.

Beloved, Chriſt is given to open mens blind eyes; go whither you will, you ſhall never have your eyes ſpiritually opened, except you go to him: oh, what a do is here with men, or in men, with breaking their own hearts, and forſaking their ſins! And whither do they run? they run to their inherent righteouſneſs, their qualifications, their prayers, their tears, their humiliations, ſorrows, reformations, univerſal obedience, and the like; but is this to run to free grace and free mercy in Chriſt? nay, Chriſt, alas, is never thought of; he is clean forgotten, and wholly neglected, and not conſidered all this while. Here is ploughing with a wooden plough; here is a working upon a dead horſe, or rather with one; what

what is in the heart of a man to plough up the rock of his own heart? No marvel, that you ſweat and toil and moil all the day long, and all lies in the ſame caſe it did: there is no ſtrength to bring forth; becauſe you go in your own, or the ſtrength of the creature, and not in the ſtrength of the Lord Jeſus.

You know when a pump is dry, men uſe not to ſtand labouring at it till they ſweat; but they firſt come, and fetch a bucket of water, and pour the water into it, and then they fall to pumping, and by virtue of the water poured in, there comes more water up, and by continual pumping they fetch out abundance: ſo your hearts are dry things, there is no ſap, no moiſture, no life in them; Chriſt muſt firſt be poured in, before you can get any thing out; wherefore then ſtand you labouring and tugging in vain? Oh, ſtay no longer, go to Chriſt; it is he that muſt break thy rocky heart, before the plough can come over it, or at leaſt enter into it. As I told you before, ſo I tell you again, you muſt conſider Chriſt as freely given unto you by the Father, even before you can believe.

There is a ſtory of *Ebedmelech* the black-moor in *Jeremy*, who by his intereſt and favour with the king, got leave to go to the dungeon to *Jeremiah* to fetch him out; he carries ropes with him, lets them down, and cauſeth *Jeremiah* to put them under his arms, and round about him; now *Jeremiah* by holding faſt the ropes, doth not pull him into the pit, but he pulls *Jeremiah* out of the

pit to himſelf. I ſpeak this by way of illuſtration. Chriſt is our *Ebedmelech* with the Father, the great King of Glory; his dealing prevails that he may have liberty to pluck us poor *Jeremies* out of the pit and dungeon of ſin and ſatan, of miſery and deſtruction. How doth he this? He doth not firſt ſend ropes, and then come after, but goes and carries them with him; that is, Chriſt doth not ſend faith firſt to believers, and then comes after as drawn by it; no, but he comes and brings it with him, and he, being preſent, lets it down to them; and when they have it, they do not draw Chriſt down to them by it, but holding it faſt, he draws them up to himſelf. So here is not faith firſt, and then Chriſt; but Chriſt comes firſt and gives faith to apprehend and lay hold upon him: conſider therefore Chriſt as your *Ebedmelech*, who comes and reacheth himſelf out to draw you up, and being firſt preſent reacheth out faith to you, by which you may hold; ſo Chriſt fetcheth you out of the pit.

Wherefore (to draw to a concluſion) remember this, as you run to Chriſt, ſo ſhall you proſper in every thing you take in hand; all the buſineſs that Chriſt undertakes ſhall go on a-main, whilſt that the creature undertakes ſhall ſtand at a ſtop: make trial, begin but with Chriſt; take him along with you in your entrance upon any thing, and you have a mighty counſellor to guide and direct you, for ſo Chriſt is called; and good counſel you know is very uſeful for a proſperous expedition of things. Again, you have a tower and refuge

refuge fully ſecure to retreat to, in caſe of extremity, or of over-maſterſhip. It uſeth to be a prime piece of policy, being to combat with an enemy, to make ſure of ſome good fort, and to maintain that; ſo that if the enemy be too ſtrong, they may know whither to go to be hid and ſaved from the preſent danger; and without ſuch a refuge they are all liable to be cut off: ſo do you begin with Chriſt; make ſure of him when you enter into the field of the world; get but this fort, and you have a place of retreat upon all occaſions; where there is moſt certain ſecurity, which the gates of hell ſhall not be able to prevail againſt; for Chriſt is that impregnable rock; but this is not all.

Chriſt is alſo *aqua vitæ*, water of life: take but Chriſt along with you, and then in all your travels no ſooner do you begin to faint, but there is *aqua vitæ* at hand; you may drink of it, and your ſpirits ſhall be refreſhed and revived. What ſhall I ſay more to you? It is Chriſt that oils the wheels of your chariots, and makes you run the ways of God's commandments; 'tis he that fills the ſails; you muſt needs lie at a calm, if he be not preſent to blow in them; take Chriſt with you, and you have the wind at command. Many a mariner would give a world to have ſuch a priviledge, as to command the natural winds, and to make them blow when, and which way he liſteth; he would never then lie wind-bound: beloved, you that have Chriſt, have the wind in your fiſts, you may be carried to any port you will; If you have him, you ſhall have a ſwift gale, and ſhall ſail a-main by his power. Therefore,

Therefore, if Chriſt be poured forth, and a gift unto men, and ſo cheap that you may have him for nothing, only receiving him; let this be your everlaſting cry and ſong, none but Chriſt, none but Chriſt; or rather in the language of the apoſtle, *I deſire to know nothing but Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified.*

SERMON VIII.

Chriſtian Liberty no Licentious Doctrine.

JOHN viii. 36.

If the Son therefore ſhall make you free, ye ſhall be free indeed.

OUR Saviour here gives a hint to his apoſtles, that they ſhould not look to fare better than their maſter; he ſpeaks of hard uſage in the world; for he came into it to fulfil a gracious and glorious miniſtry; bringing from the boſom of his Father, the great and unſearchable love the Father had from everlaſting in his thoughts towards his own dear ones; and ſo he takes all opportunities and advantages to publiſh the glad tidings of ſalvation to the ſons of men; yet met he with much oppoſition. But although Chriſt knew full well, that there were many cavillers laid ſnares to trap him

him in his words, and that they frequented the common aſſemblies where he preached, to catch ſomething from him, whereby they might have a colour at leaſt to upbraid him, and bring him into danger; I ſay, although Chriſt knew there were in all ſuch aſſemblies ſome Scribes and Phariſees, and ſuch like; yet for all this, when opportunity offered, he was graciouſly pleaſed to uſe much freedom of ſpeech to them: and though ſome were carping and cavilling at his words and his perſon, yet ſome there were to whom the glad tidings of ſalvation did belong, who by his miniſtry received them, and ſo were comforted. It ſeems it fell out thus with Chriſt, in the two former chapters, and this out of which I have taken my text; for in theſe he was graciouſly pleaſed to hold forth the light of the glad tidings of ſalvation; wherein he uſed, as I ſaid before, much freedom and boldneſs of ſpeech; which occaſioned the adverſaries of the goſpel to vent their poiſon, and ſpit the venom of their malice againſt him; he could no ſooner ſpeak a word of grace, but preſently they were upon the back of him.

Theſe three chapters contain in them nothing elſe but a continued diſpute between Chriſt and his enemies, intermingled with moſt admirable, ſweet, and gracious expreſſions of him to his own people. In verſe 30. after a large diſpute and diſcourſe, the Holy Ghoſt is pleaſed to tell us, That *many did believe in Chriſt* upon the words that he had ſpoken; here you ſee a gracious effect upon ſome, that Chriſt knew before hand; upon which

he

he took encouragement, notwithſtanding all the adverſaries oppoſition, to be bold in ſpeaking: and perceiving that his goſpel took effect upon ſome, nay, many of the people, he turns his diſcourſe from theſe carpers, with whom he had ſo long diſputed before, and begins to frame his ſpeech to the capacity and condition of the new converts and believers; therefore in verſe 31, 32. our Saviour delivers himſelf to them in this manner; *If you continue in my words*, ſaith he, *then are you my diſciples, and the truth ſhall make you free.*

Now although it be apparent, that Chriſt directs this ſpeech of his to the new believers, yet in verſe 37. the cavillers carp and cavil, whether wittingly or ignorantly I cannot ſay; they muſt needs have Chriſt to ſpeak this paſſage unto them; and they preſently in a hot and captious way reply to him; whereas he had ſaid, *They ſhould be free, and the truth ſhould make them free*; that is, as many as did believe; they preſently retorted upon him, why? *We are* Abraham's *ſeed, we were never in bondage*; how can we be made free? They might have held their tongues, Chriſt never meant them, he never ſpake to them: and though they ſaid, *They were never in bondage*; in bondage they were, and in bondage like to be. However, Chriſt did not ſpeak to them, but to believers; yet they will not leave him ſo, they will have a fling at him; therefore he anſwers their objection again. In the 33d verſe, they made uſe of this argument to aſſert their freedom; ſaid they, *We are* Abraham's *ſeed, we were never in bondage.*

What,

What, doth he talk of making us free? He takes off this recoil with a two-edged ſword; there is a double anſwer to the argument they make uſe of. *Firſt*, therefore, Chriſt ſhews what the liberty is, and wherein it ſtands, he ſpeaks of; *Secondly*, he ſhews that their plea is not good; for their being *Abraham*'s ſeed was not a plea ſufficient for their freedom.

Firſt, Chriſt ſhews what true freedom is, that he thus ſpeaks of; it is namely this, *abiding in the houſe for ever.*

Secondly, He ſhews that to be *Abraham*'s ſeed, is not enough to make them free; for the anſwer of Chriſt is thus, *He that committeth ſin* (ſaith he) *is the ſervant of ſin: now the ſervant abideth not in the houſe always, but the ſon abideth in the houſe for ever:* as much as to ſay, Suppoſe you are *Abraham*'s ſeed, yet if you commit ſin, for all this you are ſervants, you are in bondage to ſin; and, as long as you are, you have no liberty. All freedom conſiſts in this eſpecially, that Chriſt ſpeaks of, that to the *free indeed*, there will be *abiding in the houſe for ever.* The apoſtle, *Gal.* iv. 22, 23. illuſtrates to us the nature of this freedom (that Chriſt ſpeaks of) in this place, and, indeed, ſets forth the ſubſtance of it; *Do you not hear the law? You that deſire to be under the law, what ſaith it?* The law ſpeaks thus, (ſaith he) *Abraham* had two children, the one according to the promiſe, the other of the bond-woman, theſe are a myſtery; *Agar* ſignifies *Mount-Sinai* in *Arabia*, which genders unto bondage. Now *Agar* was

was the mother of *Iſhmael*; but the ſeed of the promiſe is from above. The concluſion is this, ſaith the apoſtle, *Caſt out the bond-woman and her ſon, for the ſon of the bond-woman ſhall not inherit with the ſon of the free-woman*; but he that is free, is in the inheritance for ever: the bond-woman, and her ſon, muſt not abide in the houſe for ever, they muſt be caſt out. Chriſt alludes to this, of *Abraham*'s caſting out of *Iſhmael*; as much as to ſay, There may be thoſe of the ſeed of *Abraham*, as *Iſhmael* was, yet be caſt out, being not the ſeed of the promiſe; they may be the ſeed of *Abraham*, but being the ſervants of ſin, there is no abiding for them.

Now our Saviour having repelled and anſwered their arguments, he comes, in the words of my text, to ſhew the riſe and fountain from whence this freedom, he ſpeaks of, ſprings, or takes its firſt beginning; *If the Son therefore make you free, then are you free indeed.*

The words I have read to you, are an hypothetical propoſition, or a concluſion ſtated upon a ſuppoſition, and contain in them theſe particulars. *Firſt*, The grace itſelf held out, and that is freedom, *If the Son make you free*. *Secondly*, The original, or the cauſe of it; that is, the Son's making them ſo, *If the Son make you free*. *Thirdly*, The quality of it, what kind of freedom it is; it is not a ſhadowy or empty, uſeleſs freedom, but a ſubſtantial one, *Then are you free indeed.*

This hypothetical propoſition reduced into a categorical concluſion, is no more but this, *They that the Son makes free, are free indeed.* Only

Only there is one thing obſervable from the argument of Chriſt in this place, that will add a word to this propoſition. Theſe *Jews*, that did diſpute with Chriſt, they pretended that there was no way to full freedom, but by being born of *Abraham*; ſo their being the ſeed of *Abraham*, gives them a compleat freedom: now Chriſt takes them upon advantage; he will ſuppoſe with them in their ſenſe, that if freedom were to be had by any outward priviledge, it ſhould be, by being *Abraham*'s ſeed; if, therefore, *Abraham*'s freedom be no freedom, as indeed it is not, then there can be none, but by one that is above *Abraham*. Now, ſaith Chriſt, the Son ſhall make you free; as much as to ſay, *Abraham*, the freeſt perſon in the world, cannot make you free, much leſs can any other, but the Son. So then, the propoſition is this, That they alone are indeed free, who have their freedom from the Son of God; I ſay, they alone are free indeed, who are made free only by Chriſt; none in the world, nothing in the world can make free, but the Son of God.

Now, that we may ſuck, and be ſatisfied, at the breaſts of conſolation, (for there is the ſincere milk of the word in it) let us take briefly, into our conſideration, theſe few particulars.

Firſt, What the freedom is, whereof Chriſt ſpeaks in this place.

Secondly, How Chriſt makes free.

And if time ſhall ſerve, *Thirdly*, Who they are, that are thus made free by Chriſt.

I will begin with the *firſt*, What this freedom is,

is, whereof Chriſt ſpeaks in this place. For clearing whereof, note, *firſt*, That freedom and liberty are terms of one and the ſame ſignification. It is all one to ſay, The Son makes free, or the Son gives liberty. Both the *Greek* word ἐλεύθεροι, and the *Latin* word *liberi*, are promiſcuouſly tranſlated, either free, or men at liberty. It is true, I confeſs, this word *liberty*, hath gotten an ill-name in the world, partly through the abuſe of liberty, and partly through the malignity of ſome ſpirits, that ſtrike even at the heart of Chriſt, through the ſides of thoſe that are Chriſt's; laying reproachful, ignominious, and ſhameful names, upon them of libertiniſm. Now, becauſe liberty and freedom are thus brought into reproach and diſgrace, the true freedom, which Chriſt hath purchaſed and given, requires ſome clearing, leaſt it periſh and be loſt in the rubbiſh of corrupt liberty; and ſo the people of God be jeered out of that which is their greateſt portion.

I am aſhamed to ſpeak it, I would there were not occaſion, that which is the very life and the ſole comfort of the members of Chriſt Jeſus, becomes ſuch a reproach, through the malignity of the enemies of the goſpel of Chriſt, that the very believers themſelves are almoſt aſhamed to go under the name of that that is their greateſt glory. To be called a libertine, is the moſt glorious title under heaven; take it for one that is truly free by Chriſt. To be made free by Chriſt, in proper conſtruction, is no other but this, to be made a libertine by Chriſt; I do not ſay, to be made a

libertine

libertine in the corrupt ſenſe of it, but to be one in the true and proper ſenſe of it. It is true indeed, Chriſt doth not give liberty unto licentiouſneſs of life and converſation; of which we ſhall ſpeak more by and by; but a real and true liberty, Chriſt hath purchaſed, and given to all his members.

That we may the better underſtand therefore what this freedom is, that Chriſt hath purchaſed, and beſtows upon believers; and, thereby, ſave it from the reproach of corrupt and licentious liberty; underſtand, beloved, that there is a threefold liberty. *Firſt*, Moral or civil. *Secondly*, Senſual and corrupt. *Thirdly*, Spiritual and divine.

Firſt, Moral and civil liberty is that which theſe *Jews* ſpeak of, (miſ-interpreting the ſenſe of Chriſt) ſuch as you uſe to have in your cities; when a man hath ſerved out his time, he is a freeman, he hath the freedom of the City, he hath liberty to trade in it: ſo *Paul* underſtood liberty, when he ſpake with the centurion; the centurion ſaid he bought it with a great deal of money; but, ſaith *Paul*, I was ſo born; I was born a *Roman*. But of this liberty Chriſt ſpeaks not here.

Secondly, There is a corrupt liberty; that the apoſtle ſpeaks of in *Gal.* v. 13. He tells us thus, *That we are called unto liberty*; but, ſaith he, *uſe not liberty as an occaſion to the fleſh*. A licentious liberty is nothing elſe but this, namely, when men turn the grace of God into wantonneſs, and abuſing the goſpel of Chriſt, continue in ſin, that grace might abound. Unto which the apoſtle affixes

affixes an abhorrency; God forbid, ſaith he, any man ſhould make uſe of ſuch a liberty as this. I am confident of it, and affirm boldly, there is not one man made free by Chriſt, that makes it his rule, namely, to be bold to commit ſin with greedineſs, becauſe of the redemption that is in the blood of Chriſt; but that Chriſt who hath redeemed from ſin and wrath, hath alſo redeemed from a vain converſation; and there ſhall not be a making uſe of the grace of God, as emboldening, and encouraging, to break out into licentiouſneſs. All that have this freedom purchaſed by Chriſt for them, have alſo the power of God in them, which keeps them that they break not out licentiouſly; the ſeed of God abides in them, that they cannot ſin, as in the 1. *John* iii. 9. that is, they cannot ſin after this faſhion [h].

Thirdly, There is a ſpiritual liberty; for of corrupt licentiouſneſs Chriſt ſpeaks not in the text neither; but of a ſpiritual freedom: and that it may be clear, he ſpeaks of a ſpiritual freedom here, you may plainly perceive by the words going before; for whereas theſe Phariſees affirmed they were not in bondage; Chriſt proves they were, thus; *They were the ſervants of ſin*, ſaith he; *and he that is a ſervant of ſin, abides not in the houſe for ever*; as much as to ſay, the bondage here, was ſuch, as conſiſted in being under ſin; ſo then, Chriſt here means a bondage and ſlavery under

[h] This paragraph, as well as a multitude of others, ſhews that the Dr. was no friend to licentiouſneſs, and what a madneſs it is to charge ſo worthy a perſon with holding licentious principles.

under ſin; the freedom, therefore, oppoſite to this, muſt needs be a ſpiritual freedom.

Now it will be worth our while to enquire, *firſt*, into the nature; and, *ſecondly*, into the quality of this ſpiritual freedom, that Chriſt brings with him to his own people.

Firſt, For the nature of this freedom. The philoſophers have a rule, that is of very good uſe, for clearing of divine truths; "Contraries illuſtrate "each other." Freedom will be moſt clearly, or at leaſt more clearly apparent unto us, by conſidering the contrary to freedom. The contrary to freedom is bondage; if we know what the bondage is that Chriſt ſpeaks of, we ſhall better know what the freedom is.

We will a while conſider what bondage Chriſt ſpeaks of here, to which he oppoſeth freedom, as I ſaid before.

The bondage he ſpeaks of, is a bondage under ſin. Let us briefly conſider what this is. This ſtands in theſe two things.

Firſt, An obligation unto, and under the curſe of the law, by reaſon of its tranſgreſſion.

And, *ſecondly*, In the privation of all comfort and contentment, by reaſon of the ſame tranſgreſſion.

Firſt, I ſay, an obligation unto, and under the curſe of the law, by reaſon of tranſgreſſing it, that is the firſt part of bondage under ſin. A perſon is then properly and truly under bondage, when by reaſon of his tranſgreſſion, he can make no eſcape from under the curſe of the law, but muſt lie down to it, and be under the torment of

it, as a bond-ſlave, even as a ſlave in the *Turks* gallies; though this man, in his ſlavery, works ever ſo hard; (for of that he ſhall not want, work enough he ſhall have) yet, if at any time he ſhall chance to ſlip or fall, whether it be through omiſſion, or through meer infirmity and weakneſs, and want of ſtrength; all his hard labour is nothing at all conſidered; but, when he fails in that inſupportable bondage and taſk, he hath his ſtripes and blows.

This, I ſay, is the true ſtate of bondage, when there is cruelty and rigour, without any regard to the impoſſibility to go under the taſk; the load and blows are laid on with weight; no crying, no promiſes, no excuſes, no pleas, though ever ſo reaſonable, can be heard; but, as there is a fault committed, there muſt be ſtripes inflicted. So it is with a perſon in ſpiritual bondage; a man is then under the curſe of the law, by reaſon of his tranſgreſſion, when doing what he can, (ſuppoſe as it ſhould be) yet, if he fail but in one thing, that which he doth, is not regarded nor conſidered; neither is his ability to do no more, taken notice of; but, ſtill as he ſlips, ſo the law lays on ſtripes.

There are two things, mainly to be conſidered, that do mightily embitter the condition of a bond-man, who is under the curſe of the law, becauſe of his tranſgreſſion.

The *firſt* is this, The threatenings and menacings of the curſe, inceſſantly following one upon the neck of another, with loud out-cries of bitterneſs againſt this ſoul tranſgreſſing. It is with a perſon in

in bondage to ſin, under the curſe of the law for it, as it was with *Job* in reſpect of the afflictions that were upon him: one comes and brings him word his oxen were taken away; he had no ſooner done, but another comes and tells him his ſheep were loſt; and, no ſooner had he delivered his meſſage, but another comes and tells him his camels were ſtolen; and no ſooner had he done, but one comes and tells him his ſons and daughters were ſlain; ſo one after another the meſſengers came thick upon him. It is juſt ſo with perſons in bondage under the law; it comes and threatens this curſe; then it comes and threatens a ſecond; and, no ſooner is that ended, but it comes and threatens a third, crying out continually, Curſed, curſed, curſed, curſed. If the ears of the people were open to hear as much as the law ſpeaks, they would hear nothing elſe but a peal of curſes belonging to him that is under it. As for inſtance, a man under the bondage of the law for ſin, can hear nothing but this, *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.* Beloved, there is no man, but in ſome reſpect or other, every act that he doth, hath ſome infirmity and failing in it; and, in that regard, the law ſpeaks, *Curſed art thou, for thou haſt not continued in all things that are written in the law to do them.* Thou canſt no ſooner paſs from this act to another, but as ſoon as thou doſt perform that ſecond act, for the failings in it, the law cries, Curſed again; *Curſed art thou, for thou haſt not continued in all things that are written in*

the book of the law to do them. As look into *Rom.* ii. there is a continued pealing out the law to thoſe that are in bondage under it; *Tribulation, and anguiſh, and wrath, to every ſoul that doth evil*; ſaving, that in *Rom.* iii. 19. the apoſtle tells us, this curſedneſs, this tribulation, and anguiſh, is pronounced by the law only upon them that are under it; ſo then, it is queſtionleſs, that to them that are under it, tribulation, and anguiſh, and wrath, and vengeance, do belong.

Now it is a kind of death, a very torment to be under ſuch continual menaces; to hear nothing but execrations; to hear nothing but curſes and bitterneſs, nothing but indignation and wrath; Oh! what a hell is it upon earth, for a ſoul to receive this ſentence! What a bitterneſs is it for a malefactor, that ſtands at the tribunal, to hear a judge, it may be, making a ſpeech of two hours long to him, only reciting the extremity of the torment he ſhall endure, for the crimes he hath committed! Every repetition or addition of torment, denounced and ſentenced, is a kind of fiery dart, ſtriking freſh and freſh, to the wounding of the heart. Whoever they are that are under the curſe of the law, by reaſon of ſin, there is no voice ſpeaks, or can be heard, by them, for the loudneſs of that voice, Curſed, curſed, curſed, every moment, every hour; nothing in the world but curſed.

Beloved, let me tell you, this concerns not only perſons that live in all manner of licentiouſneſs, as drunkenneſs, whoredom, the prophanation of the

the ſabbath in the groſſeſt meaſure; but, that I may ſpeak plainly, this extends in a parallel line with them, to the exacteſt, ſtricteſt, preciſeſt perſon in their converſation, though the world is not able to ſay (as men uſe to ſay) to them, black is thine eye; nay, though thou ſeem to be ſpiritual in all thy performances; nay, and largely too, yet if thou be under the law, in thy tranſgreſſion, thou ſhalt hear from it, as many curſes pronounced againſt thee, as all the prophane wretches under heaven; the greatneſs of thy honeſty and uprightneſs, whether in religion, or in matters of commerce and dealings with men, thy honeſt converſation, I ſay, hath the loud peals of curſes ſounding in thy ears. Suppoſe thou art a man diligently attending the gates of the houſe of God, given much to prayer, faſting, mourning, and weeping; yea, to great liberality, giveſt all thy goods to the poor, *&c.* Yet, I ſay, for all this thou mayeſt be under the curſe of the law; that will pick a quarrel in the beſt of theſe performances; It will ſay, thus and thus, in this and that thou haſt *not continued in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them*; concerning this, thou art under the curſe of it as well as another.

Secondly, There are not only menacings and threatenings as a fearful knell in thine ears from the law, while thou art in bondage under it; but alſo there is no more with it than a word and a blow. The Lord doth not deal with men in this caſe, as he deals with his own people, holding his rod before them to give them warning for an eſcape;

but preſently upon the tranſgreſſion, the threatening is put in execution ſpeedily without mercy, laying on the back of the tranſgreſſor, terrifying and racking the ſoul; oh the ſoul that is awakened, that hears the menaces, and feels the ſcourges of the law! Oh, what torments and anguiſh, what tribulation and bitterneſs muſt continually affright it! This, I ſay, is the commiſſion of the law, to ſpare neither high nor low, rich or poor; nay, I will go further, holy, nor unholy, in reſpect of the practice of holineſs, can exempt himſelf from the curſe of it. It is true, as the apoſtle ſaith, the law ſpeaks life; *Do this and live*; but poor comfort is it, becauſe it firſt requires ſuch doings that are impoſſible to be attained; juſt as if a man ſhould be condemned to die at a bar, with this promiſe; Take all *England*, and remove it, upon thy ſhoulders, into the *Weſt-Indies*, and then thou ſhalt be ſaved from this death [i]. The judge had has good ſay nothing, for the thing is impoſſible to be done. The law indeed ſays, *Do this and live*; but where is the man that can do it, by continuing in all things without failing in one tittle thereof?

[i] Mr. *Anthony Burgeſs*, in his *Vindiciæ Legis*, p. 14. repreſents this paſſage as a decrying of the law; but what decrying of the law is this, to obſerve the true nature and language of it, requiring that which it is impoſſible for fallen man to do: he himſelf inſtances in the goſpel, by way of reply, bidding a man believe a thing impoſſible to man's power, he obſerves; and is not this as much a decrying of the goſpel? Indeed, there is this difference, the goſpel not only encourages to believe, but it is often accompanied with the power of God enabling men to believe, whereas the law is never attended with ſuch power as to enable men to fulfill it; but this he ſays is extraneous to the matter in hand; but wherein it is ſo, is not ſaid. See *Lancaſter*'s *Vindication of the Goſpel*, &c. p. 215.

of? He that continueth in the whole law, and fails but in one point, is guilty of all; therefore, till you come to that perfection of fulfilling it, that you fail not in one tittle, never dream of the life that it holdeth out to you; if you have failed in one point, all you have done is ravelled out unto the end again; all your labour is loſt; you are as much under the curſe as if you had done nothing at all.

Yet further, beloved, the bondage under the law not only ſtands in the curſings of it, and in the preſence of all evil thereby; but alſo in the privation of all comfort, that men might have under this torment: I ſay, a privation of all comfort; for there is not a word, not a tittle of comfort for the refreſhment of a perſon under the law, not a tittle of comfort in all the law, from firſt to laſt: it is true, there was comfort intermingled in the promulgation of it, but the comfort is not from that properly ſo conſidered. As it contains in it a curſe to the diſobedient, there is no comfort to any man that is under it, in reſpect of the curſe of it; I ſay, the law is to ſuch perſons (as *Micajah* was to *Ahab)* never ſpeaking a word of good to them. But this is not all, for though the law be never ſo rigid of itſelf, if it would allow and ſuffer others to ſpeak a word of comfort, there were ſome good thing in it; but it keeps under, and ſhuts up, that there cannot be a word of comfort heard from any other, *Gal.* iii. 23. There you ſhall find that the law is not only a terror of itſelf to thoſe that are under it, but it is a moſt

rigid, ſevere keeper, that there cannot come in the leaſt glimmerings of light, and comfort elſe where; for (ſaith the apoſtle there, of perſons being under the law) they are ſhut up unto, or until the faith; for he calls the law a ſchool-maſter until Chriſt; ſo that Chriſt himſelf hath not a word of comfort for them while they are under the law [k]: when Chriſt ſpeaks any thing, preſently ſaith the law, this is not to you; this is for others that are exempted from my government, from my dominion; there is nothing of all this for you, you have nothing to do with it. I ſay, this is the condition of men that are kept under this bitterneſs of the law, that as they trangreſs, the curſe of it is their priſon: perſons kept in this eſtate, how do they put off the comforts of Chriſt from them? There is none of them belongs to me, ſaith ſuch a ſoul; I have ſinned, and all the judgments of Chriſt are pronounced againſt me, I muſt die. So long as you continue in this eſtate, the curſes of the law are as frequently pronounced againſt you, as

[k] Mr. *Burgeſs* in his *Vindiciæ Legis*, p. 14. cavils at this paſſage; he obſerves, that by the law, in *Gal.* iii 23. is meant the ſcripture in general; which, if ſo, is true of the law in particular; tho' not the whole ſcripture, but the law-part of it muſt certainly be intended, ſince part of the ſcripture, at leaſt, is written for comfort: he urges, that the apoſtle is ſpeaking of the form of *Moſes*'s regimen, and of the fathers having no comfort by that means; be it ſo, the ſame holds good of all other perſons that are under the ſame ſpirit of bondage to the law: he ſuggeſts, that the Dr. in repreſenting the law as ſuch a rigid keeper, that it will let none ſpeak comfort to a man, excludes a mediator; it is certain that it does not direct to any, and whilſt the ſoul is under the power of it, it will not ſuffer it to receive any comfort from Chriſt the mediator, or from his goſpel, untill this breaks in through the power of divine grace upon him, and delivers him from the bondage of the law. See *Lancaſter, ut ſupra*, p. 216, &c.

as there are tranſgreſſions in you; there will not be one comfort of Jeſus Chriſt to give refreſhment to your ſpirits; but ſo long as you ſtill remain in this eſtate, that you will conclude you are under the curſe, becauſe of your tranſgreſſions, you will forſake all the mercies of the goſpel. This is then to be in bondage under the law; namely, for a man ſo to have it tyrannize and domineer over him, as to make him believe that as often as he tranſgreſſes, he muſt expect the ſentence of the curſe of it to be fulfilled upon him.

Thirdly, They that are in bondage under the law becauſe of ſin, as they are ſubject to this miſery, in reſpect of the privation of comfort; ſo the law, it is true, aſks work enough, more than any man under heaven can now perform; but will provide nothing in the world, wherewith to have things done; it requires the full tale of brick, but it gives no ſtraw; it puts into no way where help may be had; it ſuffers no help to come in. Let me tell you, you that are under the curſe of the law, that is, have ſtill the law telling you that as you do fail, ſo you muſt have the curſe; you ſhall find that when you do the will of God, it will exact the whole, the utmoſt tale of brick of you, and will give no help at all, though never ſo weak, and unable: get it as you can, do what you will, when the day is done, the law requires, that there be not a brick ſhort: if you fail the leaſt that can be in it, it is no matter, able or not able, you muſt have the laſh, as well as thoſe that have the greateſt abilities in the world. It is a hard condition;

condition; I have opened it the more largely, that you may the better ſee the glory and happineſs of that freedom Chriſt hath purchaſed for his people.

I will in a word give you a touch, who the perſons are that are in this bondage; and then I will come to ſet forth the freedom itſelf; and, I hope, it will not be tedious to hear of the freedom, when you have heard of the extreme bitterneſs of this bondage.

Who are under this bondage?

I anſwer, as I ſaid before, Whoever you are, that will apply ſtill to yourſelves, the ſentence and curſe of the law, becauſe of tranſgreſſion; you that will be ſtill arguing and pleading, if I tranſgreſs it is but juſtice, and I muſt expect to feel the ſmart of the rod; I ſay, you that will ſtill maintain and eſtabliſh the curſe, as a neceſſary attendant upon tranſgreſſion and diſobedience, and take this to be your condition and your portion, you are the men that are under the law, that are under the curſe of it. I know, although you may think to wind yourſelves out of the extremity of the curſe, or from the rod of the law, by your ſtrictneſs and exactneſs, and grow up to perfection in your obedience; yet all your perfection of obedience ſhall not be able to except you from the laſh, till you have attained to ſuch, that hath not one jot or tittle of failing and aberration at all; for if you fail in one tittle you are gone for ever; for the law, as it attends great faults, ſo it attends little failings too; and if you give it power over you, when you commit great ſins, it will

will take power to itſelf, to whip, to curſe you for ſmall ſins too.

I will come to diſcover what the freedom is, from the bondage Chriſt ſpeaks of here; I ſay, this freedom is from all this bondage under ſin and the law. *Firſt*, Chriſt exempts men and diſcharges them, and acquits them from all the menaces, and threatenings, and all the bitter language that the law pronounces againſt the tranſgreſſors of it. Mark well what I ſay, Every perſon made free by Chriſt, is freed and exempted, that the law cannot, muſt not pronounce one curſe againſt him: there is not one of all the curſes in it, that belongs to ſuch a man that is made free by Chriſt. This ſeems ſtrange, that the law ſhould not dare to pronounce the curſe, where ſin is commited; but not ſo ſtrange as true; the freemen of Chriſt, when they tranſgreſs the law, as in all things they ſin, yet when they ſin, there is no curſe, no menaces, no threatenings of the law to be executed upon them: ſhould I come to inſtance, peradventure I ſhould give offence to ſome; I would not willingly give offence to any; but the truth, as it is in Jeſus, muſt not be concealed for fear of the choler of thoſe that are enemies unto Chriſt: let me therefore tell you, ſuppoſe a member of Chriſt, a free-man of his ſhould happen to fall, not only by a failing or a ſlip; but alſo by a groſs failing, a heavy failing; nay, a ſcandalous falling into ſin; Chriſt making a perſon free, diſannuls, fruſtrates, and makes void every curſe and ſentence that is in the law, that is againſt

againſt ſuch a tranſgreſſor; that this member of Chriſt is no more under the curſe when he hath tranſgreſſed, than he was before he tranſgreſſed. Thus I ſay, Chriſt hath conveyed him beyond the reach of the curſe; it concerns him no more than if he had not tranſgreſſed. For the illuſtration of this, I beſeech you to conſider this one thing, it is familiar to you, and the caſe is the ſame with Chriſt's free-men; ſuppoſe there are two men, equally guilty of felony and murder; both of them come to their arraignment; one of them hath his diſcharge or pardon from the king, having received ſatisfaction in his behalf; the other hath received no diſcharge at all. The judge goes on to pronounce the ſentence according to the law; thou ſhalt go from hence to the place from whence thou cameſt, and from thence to the place of execution there to be hanged: now mark, theſe are two men equal in tranſgreſſion; and therefore in themſelves equally deſerving the ſame ſentence of execution; when the judge pronounces the juſtice of the law upon the one tranſgreſſor, he hath not his diſcharge, he lies under the ſentence; but the other hath his diſcharge, and therefore the judge ſpeaks not a word of this ſentence to him; I ſay again, the judge dares not ſpeak a word of this ſort to him; and when the man that is pardoned hears the ſentence, he may hear it as the doom of his fellow; but he hears nothing of it concerning himſelf: ſo it is with the free-man of Chriſt, he may fall into the ſame ſin that a reprobate falls into, (as *Noah* was once drunk, *David* did once commit

commit adultery and murder) but as this man is the free-man of Chriſt, the curſe cannot attack him; though the law ſay to the reprobate, that hath not freedom by Chriſt, thou ſhalt certainly be damned for this; yet the law cannot ſay one word of this to him that is a free-man, though he commit the ſame fault, and be guilty of the ſame puniſhment; and the ground of all this is, that Chriſt hath made him free from it. Therefore, let me tell you in a word; if you be free-men of Chriſt, you may eſteem all the curſes of the law, as no more concerning you, than the laws of *England* concern *Spain*, or the laws of *Turky* an *Engliſhman*, with whom they have nothing to do [1]. I do not ſay the law is abſolutely aboliſhed, but it is aboliſhed in reſpect of the curſe of it, to every perſon that is a free-man of Chriſt; ſo though ſuch a man ſin, the law hath no more to ſay to him than if he had not ſinned. Beloved, Chriſt is a ſanctuary, he is a priviledged place to every one of his free-men; the law is not able to ſerve, or rather it is diſabled from ſerving a writ *ad capiendum*, upon the perſon that is walking in Chriſt, and

[1] This paſſage is moſt groſsly miſrepreſented by Mr. *Burgeſs*, in his *Vindiciæ Legis*, p. 13. who quotes it thus, "A man, under "grace, hath no more to do with the law than an *Engliſhman* "hath with the laws of *Spain* or *Turky*:" whereas the Dr's. words and ſenſe are, that Chriſt's freemen ſhould eſteem the curſes of the law, (not the law itſelf) as no more concerning them, than the laws of *England* concern *Spain*, or thoſe of *Turky* an *Engliſhman*; and to prevent any miſtake, leſt it ſhould be thought that they have nothing to do with the law in any ſenſe, being freed from the curſes of it, he adds the words that follow, which moſt clearly ſhew, that he meant not an abolition of the law in all reſpects, but in reſpect of the curſe of it, and that to Chriſt's freemen only.

and keeps himſelf within thoſe bounds; *He that continues in my word is my diſciple, and the truth ſhall make him free.* If you abide in Chriſt, and keep in Chriſt, no ſerjeant of the law dares come in to ſerve a writ; no accuſation of the law can come in againſt you. Look what the apoſtle triumphing ſaith, *Rom.* viii. 33, 34. *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that juſtifieth, who ſhall condemn? it is Chriſt that died, yea, rather, that is riſen again.* Mark well I pray you, *Paul* doth not ſay, that the elect never tranſgreſs; he confeſſes that there is tranſgreſſion; but that which he triumphs in is, that though they tranſgreſs, there is nothing to be laid to their charge; no curſe can come againſt them, nor be executed upon them; there is no clapping them in goal for their tranſgreſſion.

Secondly, The free-man of Chriſt, as he is exempted from the curſe and rod of the law, that is become as a muzzle-chapt dog, he may paſs and repaſs without the leaſt ſnap, without the leaſt bite of it; yea, though he fall, yet it cannot come at him, to hurt him: ſo, in the ſecond place, the freeman of Chriſt is let looſe to enjoy the free Spirit, as *David* calls it, in *Pſal.* li. or the comforting Spirit, as Chriſt calls it, in *John* xiv. 26. I ſay, this freedom conſiſts in this, to have free ſociety, and free diſcourſe, with the free Spirit of God; ſo that the free-man of Chriſt may hear all the gracious language provided in the rich thoughts of God for him; he may hear, and that with application to himſelf, that his iniquities are blotted out

out as a cloud; that God will remember his ſins no more; that they are caſt into the bottom of the ſea; they are laid all upon Chriſt; that the Lamb of God took them all away; that the blood of Chriſt cleanſeth him from all ſins. It is a marvelous freedom indeed, to have this participation of communion with this free Spirit of Chriſt, to hear ſuch comfortable language, to raiſe up a drooping ſpirit, to ſatisfy a languiſhing ſoul.

Thirdly, The free-man of Chriſt hath this freedom, that Chriſt doth all his work for him, as well as in him. He that is in bondage under the law, as I told you before, muſt do every thing himſelf, and that he doth, he muſt do perfectly; that is an inſupportable thing, and heavy bondage, for a man to have more laid upon him than his ſtrength is able to bear; the free-man of Chriſt, conſidering that he is weak, poor, and unable to work, Chriſt doth all his work for him. In *Iſa.* xxvi. 12. the Holy Ghoſt tells us, he hath done all our works in us; and in the margin the words are rendered, he hath done all our works for us; But, look into *Rom.* v. 19. you ſhall plainly ſee this freedom of the free-men of Chriſt, that they ſtand righteous in the ſight of God, by that which he hath done for them; Chriſt hath ſo wrought for them, that they are as righteous, as if they had done all in their own perſons: *As by the diſobedience of one, many were made ſinners; ſo by the obedience of one, many are made righteous:* look here, and you ſhall ſee that Chriſt doth all the work for his free-men, that they ſhould do

themſelves:

themſelves : as if a man were commanded to bring in a thouſand bricks by ſuch a day, or elſe to have the ſtrapado ; another man brings in all his bricks for him, while he doth not one for himſelf ; what the other man doth for him, is accepted as a full tale, even for this man, though he doth nothing himſelf ; even ſo it is with the free-men of Chriſt, he doth all for them, that God requires of them to be done ; and the righteouſneſs of Chriſt ſtands in that manner theirs, as if they had done it themſelves : *For by the obedience of one, many are made righteous* ; not by obedience in their own perſons, but by the obedience of one man, Chriſt ; even by the obedience of him alone, we ſtand thus righteous before God.

But ſome will ſay, By this it ſeems, we take away all endeavours and employment from believers, the free-men of Chriſt. Doth Chriſt do every thing for them ? Do they ſtand righteous before God, in reſpect of what he hath done for them ? Then they may ſit ſtill, they may do what they liſt.

I anſwer, Will you deny this, that we are righteous with God ; and that we are righteous with God, by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt ? Or is it by our own righteouſneſs ? Then mark what the apoſtle ſaith, *Rom.* x. 3, 4. *They*, ſaith he, (ſpeaking of the *Jews*) *going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves to the righteouſneſs of God ; for Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs, to every one that believeth.* Either you muſt diſclaim Chriſt's righteouſneſs, or you muſt

muſt diſclaim your own; for, if the gift of God *be of grace, then it is not of works; elſe work is no more work: and, if it be of works, it is no more of grace, otherwiſe grace is no more grace*, Rom. xi. 6.

But you will ſay further to me, (for except a man be a meer Papiſt, I am ſure, he cannot deny but that the righteouſneſs by which I ſtand righteous before God, is the righteouſneſs Chriſt doth for me, and not that I can do for myſelf) you will aſk me, I ſay, Doth not this take off from all manner of obedience, and all manner of holineſs?

I anſwer, and thus much I ſay, It takes them off from thoſe ends which they aim at in their obedience; namely, The end for which Chriſt's obedience ſerved; as much as to ſay, Our ſtanding righteous, by what Chriſt hath done for us, concerns us in point of juſtification, conſolation, and ſalvation; we have our juſtification, our peace, our ſalvation, only by the righteouſneſs Chriſt hath done for us: but this doth not take away our obedience, nor our ſervices, in reſpect of thoſe ends for which ſuch are now required of believers. We have yet ſeveral ends for duties and obedience; namely, That they may glorify God, and evidence our thankfulneſs; that they may be profitable to men; that they may be ordinances wherein to meet with God, to make good what he hath promiſed; ſo far we are called out to ſervices, and walking uprightly, ſincerely, exactly, and ſtrictly, according to the good pleaſure of God; and, in regard of ſuch ends, there is a gracious freedom that the free-men of Chriſt have by him; that is, ſo far

forth as ſervices and obediences are expected at the free-man's hand, for the ends that I have named, there is Chriſt, by his Spirit, preſent with thoſe that are free-men, to help them in all ſuch kind of ſervices; ſo that *they become ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, to do the will of God. Mark what the apoſtle ſpeaks, *I am able to do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthens me. Of myſelf* (ſaith he) *I am able to do nothing; but with Chriſt, and through him that ſtrengthens me, I am able to do all things.* He that is Chriſt's free-man hath always the ſtrength of Chriſt preſent, anſwerable to that weight and burthen of employment God calls him forth unto; *My grace* (ſaith Chriſt) *ſhall be ſufficient for thee, and my ſtrength ſhall be made perfect in weakneſs:* as you are free-men of Chriſt you may confidently reſt upon it, that he *will never fail you, nor forſake you*, when he calls you forth into employments: but you that are under the law, there is much required of you, and impoſed upon you, but no help to be expected; you muſt do all by your own ſtrength; the whole tale of brick ſhall be exacted of you, but no ſtraw ſhall be given you: but you, that are free-men of Chriſt, he will help you, he will oil your wheels, fill your ſails, and carry you upon eagles wings, that you ſhall run and not be weary, walk and not faint. So then, the free-men of Chriſt, having him and his Spirit for their life and ſtrength, may go infinitely beyond the exacteſt legaliſt in the world, in more chearful obedience than they can perform. He that walks in his own ſtrength can never ſteer his

buſineſs

buſineſs ſo well and ſo quickly, as he that hath the arms, the ſtrength, and the principles of the great God of heaven and earth; as he that hath this great Supporter, this wiſe Director, this mighty Aſſiſter to be continually by him. There is no burthen, you ſhall bear, but, by this freedom, you have him to put his own ſhoulder to it to bear it up.

It is wonderful to conſider, that Chriſt ſhould groan under the burthen laid upon him, by his Father, when he cried out, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* And yet *Paul* and *Silas* ſhould ſing for joy, when their bodies were covered with gore-blood by reaſon of ſtripes: how comes this to paſs, was *Paul* ſtronger than Chriſt? If not, why was he ſo joyful, and Chriſt ſo ſad? God withdrew himſelf from Chriſt, and, therefore, he ſaith, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* But the ſtrength of Chriſt was preſent with *Paul*, that this very impriſonment was a palace and recreation to him; Chriſt bear all the burthens for him. Oh! were you but the free-men of Chriſt, and did you but know it, every affliction would be but a flea-biting; for he would bear all your duties and burthens for you; he would ſtand under the greateſt weight that can be laid upon you, and bear it off your backs; the greateſt burthen ſhould never make you ſtoop, becauſe there is a ſufficient ſtrength to bear it up. There may be a heavy burthen laid upon the back of a child, and yet it may with eaſe go under it; becauſe there is a greater ſtrength that bears it up, it doth not lie upon the child. So long as Chriſt bears up your

weight, it ſhall be eaſy to you. You know there is a ceremony in uſe among us, for men to carry the corps of their friends to the grave; for faſhion's ſake they go under the corps; but there are bearers appointed that bear all the weight upon their ſhoulders: ſo Chriſt bears all for his free-men; and this is the freedom men have by him, that if they are to bear any burthens, he comes and bears all for them; and they go as eaſily under them, as if they had none upon them at all.

You ſhall find the free-men of Chriſt, that they have alſo the conſtant attendance of the free Spirit of Chriſt waiting upon them. When Chriſt hath made any man free, he ſends his Spirit from heaven, firſt to acquaint the ſoul with all that he hath done for him; and not to bring good news, and be gone again; but, after the good news is brought, he waits and attends upon this free-man in all his journeys and travels to thoſe manſions that Chriſt hath prepared for him; that ſo in the way, if he ſhould faint, he would refreſh him with the water of life, to fetch it again; and, in caſe it grows weak and fails, the Spirit attends to adminiſter cordials, to revive, and to renew the ſtrength of this man again that thus fails; and, in caſe it grow weary, the Spirit is ſent to take it up into his arms, into his boſom; in caſe the way is tedious, the Spirit is ſent to take off the tediouſneſs of the way with ſweet diſcourſe, telling him, what things are laid up in fulneſs of pleaſures and glory, telling him what welcome there will be at his coming home; when there are many bye-ways in his

his way, that there may be no going out of the way, he will direct him and lead him by the hand, and never leave him, till he hath delivered him up into the hands of Christ, and carried him unto mansions in glory.

Lastly, In a word, to speak of that, Who these free-men of Christ are. No man knows them, but only those that Christ takes out of bondage. Time will not give me leave to be large here; would you have any means how you may come to be the free-men of Christ? know this, that there is no consideration in the business of Christ, for the making of men free, but only their bondage in which they are. The sum is this, beloved, in brief, Christ doth not look that you should come forth and meet him, to mediate, or intercede, or beg, or bring a price in your hands, that you may be his free-men; but he looks upon persons as they are bound up, as helpless, as unable to will or do any thing; and, for his own compassion's sake, he takes up these, when they little dream, or think they ever shall be set at liberty.

But, you will say, All shall not be freed that are in bondage: how shall I then know that I am one of the number of Christ's free-men?

I answer, *He that believeth shall be saved:* if the Lord give but to thy spirit, now truly to believe, thou art the very man for whom Christ was sent to proclaim liberty; I say, if thou can'st believe and roll thyself upon him, cleave to him, and say, "I will not let thee go;" this is security enough; Christ was sent to deliver thee: *He that cometh*

unto me, I will in no wiſe caſt him out. I beſeech you, conſider, (the Lord God, in the abundant riches of his grace, give cloſing ſpirits to ſome of you at this time) You think there muſt be a great deal of pains, by your endeavours, and on your parts, to have this freedom; but Chriſt doth not look for your pains; he came to ſave thoſe that could not tell which way to turn themſelves. And if the ſcripture be true, (as moſt certainly it is) if thou believeſt he is thine, if thou believe with all thy heart, thy ſins are forgiven thee; (though the very believing itſelf doth not [m] infeoffe you in this freedom) but, if you would know, whether you have any part in this freedom or not, believing in the Lord Chriſt is a ſufficient manifeſtation. Do but catch hold of him, to have thy deliverance by him, he muſt forſake himſelf, and deny his truth, if he caſt or throw thee off.

[m] Intitle to it, intereſt in it, or inveſt with it.

SERMON

SERMON IX.

Men's own Righteouſneſs their Grand Idol.

ROMANS x. 3.

For they being ignorant of God's righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves to the righteouſneſs of God.

PROVIDENT and well-wiſhing pilots, obſerving the rocks on which many ignorant and heedleſs paſſengers have ſplit and ſunk; and where they themſelves have eſcaped but narrowly; uſe to ſet up ſea-marks as cautions or warnings to ſuch as ſhall come after, that by other mens harms they may learn to be wary. It is the apoſtle's very practice in this place; in the former part of this epiſtle, and eſpecially in chap. ix. he mightily contends for the free grace of God unto peace, life, and ſalvation, without works: *The children being yet unborn, and having done neither good nor evil, but that the purpoſe of God might ſtand according to election, not of works, but of grace; it was ſaid,* Jacob *have I loved,* Eſau *have I hated: he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardens:* I ſay, this is the main doctrine that he preacheth, from the beginning of the epiſtle, to the cloſure of chap. ix. Then

Then he comes upon the *Jews* with an argument to their reproach: *The Gentiles that followed not after righteouſneſs, have attained unto righteouſneſs, when they themſelves that did follow after righteouſneſs could not attain it:* and he gives the reaſon why they that preſſed ſo hard after it could not attain it; *Becauſe they ſought it not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law.* Why, what hurt was there in that, will ſome ſay? The apoſtle anſwereth, that hereby *they ſtumbled at that ſtumbling-block, as it is written; I lay in* Sion *a ſtumbling-ſtone, and a rock of offence:* This it ſeems was the rock of offence; they would have their righteouſneſs ſet up to do them good, and this they ſought as it were by the works of the law.

But ſome men might think that the apoſtle had a bitterneſs of ſpirit, or ſome malice againſt his own brethren, and that this was but the fruit of it; therefore in the beginning of this chapter, he clears himſelf from any ſuch baſe ends in his miniſtry: for his part he wiſhes with all his heart, it may be well with them; *My heart's deſire, and prayer for* Iſrael *is, that they may be ſaved*; nay, ſo far as he may ſpeak well of them, and the moſt he can ſpeak, he will; and he will not conceal any thing: in verſe 2. he confeſſes, nay he bears witneſs to it, that *they had a zeal of God*; but yet he muſt not diſſemble, he muſt deal friendly, though ever ſo plainly; though they had a zeal of God, *Yet it was not according to knowledge.*

And becauſe he had taxed them with ignorance, here in the text; he diſcovers what this ignorance

of

of theirs was; and what the fearful and desperate fruits of it were; that whereof they were ignorant, was *God's righteousness*, *being ignorant of the righteousness of God*; the fruit of it is twofold, both very bitter, the one immediately issuing from the other.

First, This ignorance of God's righteousness put them upon a fearful mistake; *They go about*, upon this, *to establish their own righteousness.*

Secondly, And that mistake put them upon another as bad as that, if not worse; therefore they submitted not to the righteousness of God.

The proposition the words afford us, is briefly this, (for we will sum up the whole verse into one head) namely; *That ignorance of God's righteousness puts men upon these two dangerous mischiefs, an establishing of their own righteousness, and not submitting themselves to the righteousness of God.*

Men will establish their own righteousness; they will not submit to the righteousness of God, while they are ignorant of it. Beloved, they were not so easily misled, as we are apt to follow them, having gone before us; we are like sheep leaping without looking, if any leap before us; it hath been the rock of offence, a stumbling-stone from the beginning to this day, and will be to the end of the world; there will be an establishing of our own righteousness without submiting to the righteousness of God, while there is an ignorance of this righteousness.

Now, that we may take warning, and so escape the

the danger, that they have felt the ſmart of already, it will be requiſite we take into conſideration,

Firſt, What this righteouſneſs of theirs and ours is, that they did, and we are apt to go about to eſtabliſh.

Secondly, What it is to go about to eſtabliſh this our righteouſneſs.

Thirdly, What this righteouſneſs of God is that they did not ſubmit unto.

Fourthly, What it is, not to ſubmit unto this righteouſneſs of God.

Fifthly, What this ignorance is, from whence both theſe fearful evils iſſue, the eſtabliſhing of our own righteouſneſs, and not ſubmitting to the righteouſneſs of God.

And, *laſtly*, What the iſſue in the end will prove. Of theſe, or as many of theſe as the time will permit, in their order.

To begin with the firſt, What is that righteouſneſs of theirs and ours, that the apoſtle complains of, that being eſtabliſhed, is a rock of offence?

I am not ignorant, that the eyes of ſome perſons are only, or moſt, upon a righteouſneſs of man's own deviſing and contriving; ſuch a righteouſneſs as never came into God's thoughts; a righteouſneſs according to the precepts and traditions of men; ſuch a righteouſneſs as our Saviour, in *Mat.* xv. 9. taxeth the Phariſees withal, who *Taught for doctrines the traditions of men*; and by their own traditions, as much as in them lay, made void the commandments of God: this kind of righteouſneſs in our time proceeds from the preſumption

ſumption of men, that dare put any thing of their own, without warrant and commiſſion from God, into the worſhip and ſervice of God; charging things upon men as duties of religion, that God binds not men unto: for my own part, I am clear of the mind, that this kind of righteouſneſs is far from the righteouſneſs of God, the apoſtle here ſpeaks of; and that it is the higheſt preſumption that a man can poſſibly take upon himſelf, to ſet himſelf ſo in the place of God, as not only, not to command from him, but alſo to command without and againſt him: law-givers hold themſelves then moſt diſparaged and contemned, when any inferior will take upon him to make laws without them, or againſt them. It will lie heavy when it ſhall once come to an account, not only upon the actors, but alſo upon thoſe that may be the redreſſers, if this kind of righteouſneſs eſtabliſhed by ſome be not brought down, and laid in the duſt.

But, under favour, I conceive that the apoſtle aims at a more ſublime righteouſneſs, than the righteouſneſs in the precepts of men; he ſpeaks of ſuch a righteouſneſs, which ſome it may be are too forward to eſtabliſh, who yet abhor to eſtabliſh the other, we have now ſpoken of: the righteouſneſs the apoſtle complains of being eſtabliſhed, is not the righteouſneſs of man's making, but of God's own making, a righteouſneſs according to his own will; I mean a righteouſneſs conſiſting in obedience to the things that God himſelf hath commanded unto men; a righteouſneſs which is a walking in all the commandments of God, though

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it be in a way of blameleſsneſs; this very righteouſneſs, I ſay, is that, which being eſtabliſhed, proves a ſtumbling-ſtone, and a rock of offence to all that ſhall eſtabliſh it.

This may ſeem harſh, beloved, at firſt, but I ſhall make it clear to you from the apoſtle's own interpretation of himſelf, who beſt knew his own mind: that this is the righteouſneſs he here ſpeaks of, mark but the words immediately following the text, chap. x. 4. *For*, ſaith he, *Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth*; to what purpoſe doth he bring this paſſage, that Chriſt is the end of the law; but that by theſe words he might confute their vanity, who think to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs in the fulfilling of the law? As if he ſhould ſay, you think by your keeping the law, by your righteouſneſs you perform, you can attain to the end of it, that ſo you may obtain the grace and goodneſs of the Lord; but it is in vain, it is not you that can reach the end of the law; neither doth God aim at it that you ſhould reach it, but he hath conſtituted and ordained Chriſt to be the end of it. Therefore the righteouſneſs of God muſt be the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; the righteouſneſs that God aims at is perfect, a righteouſneſs that reaches to the very end of the law; your righteouſneſs can never reach to the end of it; it is Chriſt's alone that doth it.

And yet again, in verſe 5. the apoſtle clears more fully what he means by our righteouſneſs; for there he begins to make the diſtinction between

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our righteouſneſs, and the righteouſneſs of God, explaining what they both are: *Moſes*, ſaith he, *deſcribing the righteouſneſs of the law*, ſaith thus, (that which he calls our own righteouſneſs, in verſe 4. from *Moſes*, he calls the righteouſneſs of the law, in verſe 5.) *He that doth thoſe things ſhall even live in them:* and if you will look into *Levit.* xviii. 5. you ſhall there ſee what the righteouſneſs of the law is, which the apoſtle ſpeaks of in this place; and if you obſerve but the margin of your bible, you ſhall find this very text, in verſe 5. is wiſely referred to that of *Leviticus*, *You ſhall keep my ſtatutes, and do my judgments; which if a man do, he ſhall even live in them.* See, the apoſtle makes uſe of the very phraſe, *he that doth them ſhall live through them, and in them.* It is the *righteouſneſs of the law*, ſaith he; it is the *keeping of God's ſtatutes, and doing of God's judgments*, ſaith *Moſes*. By this, you may ſee what righteouſneſs it is, that the Lord by the apoſtle ſpeaks of; a righteouſneſs that conſiſts *in doing the ſtatutes and judgments of the Lord.*

And if you will but conſider in *Luke* xviii. 11, 12. the condition of the Phariſee, Chriſt ſpeaks of, who went up into the temple to pray as the Publican did; in him you ſhall ſee, I ſay, and eaſily perceive, what the righteouſneſs was, that they went about to eſtabliſh; for there the Phariſee juſtifies himſelf in reſpect of many particular branches of the law; I thank thee, ſaith he, *I am not as other men are, an extortioner, unjuſt, an adulterer, nor as this Publican: I faſt twice in the week,*

week, I pay tythes of all that I poſſeſs. Mark it well, I pray, ſee what it is that he pleads for, as that which muſt prevail with God for good to him; it is his own righteouſneſs; and what is that? It is a righteouſneſs according to the law; it is a righteouſneſs of piety, of juſtice; *I faſt twice in the week, I am no extortioner, nor unjuſt perſon, nor adulterer, &c.* Now hear Chriſt's anſwer concerning this Phariſee; you ſhall ſee what he thinks of this righteouſneſs he ſpeaks of; *The Publican went away rather juſtified than he*; and the reaſon is, becauſe he did go in the ſtrength of this righteouſneſs of his, to ſpeed with God; his expectation was from this; it was not a righteouſneſs of his own deviſing and contriving; but a righteouſneſs according to God's law.

If you look further into *Philip.* iii. you ſhall find, the apoſtle ſpeaks fully to the caſe in hand, inſtancing in himſelf, in verſe 5, 6, 7. where he gives an account of his eſtate, in which he was before the time of his converſion. *Firſt*, he ſaith, he had a zeal for God, and that put him on ſo hot, that he perſecuted the church of God, meerly out of ignorance; for, ſaith he of himſelf, *I did it ignorantly:* and *concerning the righteouſneſs of the law*, ſaith he, *I was blameleſs*; mark that paſſage well; all this was before converſion; afterwards he tells us, this was in the time of his ignorance, wherein he made full account that this righteouſneſs of his was his gain; but, ſaith he, *what was gain to me, I accounted loſs*; *yea, and I ſuffer the loſs of all things, that I may be found in Chriſt,*

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not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is by the law. By all theſe paſſages, I ſay, put together, wherein the apoſtle ſo fully expounds himſelf, it plainly appears, that the righteouſneſs of the law, the eſtabliſhing whereof, he here taxeth, as a dangerous miſtake, and a fruit of ignorance, is that, wherein men walk according to God's own law blameleſly.

I am not ignorant, beloved, how this aſſertion goeth under the foul blur of *Antinomianiſm*, that blameleſs walking according to the law, being eſtabliſhed, is a fruit of ignorance, and a cauſe of men's not *ſubmitting to the righteouſneſs of God.* And no marvel it goes for ſuch now; for, in the apoſtle's time, it was accounted ſo; nay, it was objected againſt the apoſtle himſelf, as direct *Antinomianiſm*; and, therefore, he was enforced to vindicate himſelf thus, *Do we make void the law,* ſaith he, *through faith? God forbid!* He takes away the objection they put to him, upon his eſtabliſhing of God's righteouſneſs, and his overthrowing our righteouſneſs. It was objected, that hereby he went about to make void the law; and, therefore, it is no marvel it holds ſtill as an objection, that the maintaining of this principle is the overthrowing of the law. But, beloved, I muſt ſay to you, as the apoſtle did in the ſame caſe, *God forbid! yea, we eſtabliſh the law,* that is to ſay, in its right place. It takes men off from performing duties to corrupt ends, and from the bad uſe they are apt to make of them, namely, idolizing their own righteouſneſs. And, therefore, he doth not

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condemn the uſe of the law, and our righteouſneſs, ſimply: that which he ſpeaks againſt here, is the eſtabliſhing of our righteouſneſs. Our own righteouſneſs is good in its kind, and for its own proper uſes; but then it proves a fruit of ſin, ignorance, and a dangerous ſtumbling-block, and an idol, when we go about to eſtabliſh it.

I come, therefore, to the *ſecond* thing, which is to clear this truth more fully, namely, What it is to eſtabliſh this righteouſneſs; or what eſtabliſhing the apoſtle drives at in this place.

For the clearing of which, the antitheſis, or the oppoſition, that he ſets, will give you a great deal of light to underſtand his meaning and purpoſe here, by *going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, and not ſubmitting to the righteouſneſs of God.* He ſpeaks here, therefore, of ſuch an eſtabliſhing of our righteouſneſs, according to the law, as to bring it into the room, and ſtead, or place of God's righteouſneſs. It is ſuch an eſtabliſhing of it, as that for it we cannot, nor will not admit, that the righteouſneſs of God ſhould do its office. So far forth, then, as any righteouſneſs of ours encroaches upon the privileges and prerogatives of the righteouſneſs of God, ſo that that cannot do its own work, or at leaſtwiſe muſt be circumſcribed in doing it, by this; ſo far is there an eſtabliſhing of our own righteouſneſs, which is a fruit of ignorance, and is a ſtumbling-ſtock, and a rock of offence.

It will be worth the while, therefore, to conſider, When our righteouſneſs is ſaid truly to be eſtabliſhed in the room and ſtead of the righteouſneſs

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of God. This will be cleared by the conſideration of the main ſcope and drift of men, in the performing of the righteouſneſs which they eſtabliſh. When men put that upon their own righteouſneſs, which ſhould have been put upon God's only; when men make that the ſanctuary and refuge that God's righteouſneſs only ſhould be; then is it ſet up as a grand idol, and eſtabliſhed in the room and place of God's righteouſneſs. To clear the caſe to you, by ſome particular inſtances; it is a thing of great importance, as at all times, ſo now at this time of eminent danger, the ſword being over our heads, and over the whole nation; (the Lord having revealed to the ſpirits of men, by his truth, that in caſe of eminent danger, there ſhould be a great deal of zeal to God) that the people of God ſhould be put mightily on, to deal with God in this preſent extremity and neceſſity; but, I am afraid, many *have a zeal of God*, in this very caſe, but yet, *not according to knowledge*; for that too many (ignorantly and zealouſly, I confeſs, yet, I ſay, too many) in this zeal to God, for their own ſafety and ſecurity, too much eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs: And, I fear, if there be a miſcarriage after ſo many faſting-days, and ſo much praying and ſeeking God, that the fruits will be the eſtabliſhing of our own righteouſneſs, in the room and place of the righteouſneſs of God. As for example, when ſin abounds, whether perſonally, or generally, what is the way to get off, or get out of ſuch tranſgreſſion? I appeal to your own ſpirits, you that are ſpiritual; is not this your end,

you propound ? To faſt, and pray, and mourn it out ; this is that which muſt bring you a diſcharge of your ſins ; this is that which muſt bring you tidings that God will be pacified towards you, that God will turn away his anger from you ; if you do but faſt ſpiritually, mourn bitterly, pray zealouſly with ſtrength of ſpirit, this is that that ſhall overcome God.

I aſk, or I beſeech you rather aſk your own ſpirits, (I mean ſtill, you that are ſpiritual) Do not your hearts run out continually this way ? Do they, or do they not ? What then mean all the complaints of yours upon the defects of your faſtings, your humiliation, ſelf-denial, and the ſubduing of your corruptions ? That this is that which pulls down the wrath of God upon us ; is not this common among us, as long as men do not mend, there is no hope that God will ? and, if every man would mend one, this is the way to redreſs the evil of the times ? Beloved, let me deal plainly and freely with you ; they that put deliverance from ſin and wrath, upon the ſpiritual performances of that righteouſneſs, which the law commands them, they put that righteouſneſs in the room and place of the righteouſneſs of God ; they make it as great an idol as can be ; for they make it to be that, which God's righteouſneſs only is. I ſpeak not againſt the doing of any righteouſneſs according to the will of God revealed ; let that mouth be for ever ſtopped, that ſhall be opened to blame the law that is holy, juſt, and good ; or ſhall be a means to diſcourage people

ple from walking in the commandments of God blameleſs [n].

All that I ſpeak is this, That it will prove a rock of offence in the end, if it be not turned from; namely, That we ſhould expect that our own righteouſneſs ſhould bring down a gracious anſwer from God to our ſpirits; that when we have done our work, in effect, that muſt prove our mediator and meſſenger from God; and, as that will ſpeak, ſo will we have peace, or remain in bitterneſs of ſpirit. What can the righteouſneſs of God himſelf do more than this, to have power with God, to prevail over God for good to us?

Beloved, although ſome, peradventure, may magnify performances done in a ſpiritual way with attributes and titles even of God's own peculiar; I mean with attributes of omnipotency and invincibleneſs; certainly there is no omnipotency but in God himſelf, and the righteouſneſs that is God's own; the beſt righteouſneſs that ever any man could act, or perform in all his life, is not able to divert the leaſt effect of ſins, or wrath, or procure or obtain the leaſt ſmile of favour from God. You know, that *God is a God of purer eyes, and cannot behold iniquity*; you know, that iniquity is that which ſeparates between God and a people; now what is the perfecteſt righteouſneſs which the beſt man upon earth performs? Is it not full of unrighteouſneſs and iniquity? *All our righteouſneſſes* (ſaith the prophet *Iſaiah*) *are but as filthy*

[n] Is this *Antinomianiſm?* Or, can ſuch a preacher be called an *Antinomian?*

rags; and, ſaith the apoſtle, *I account all as dung that I may win Chriſt, and be found in him, not having my own righteouſneſs.* Is there dung and filth in the beſt of man's righteouſneſs? and can this righteouſneſs have power with God, and prevail over him?

Look upon Chriſt himſelf, when he did bear the ſins of many, upon his own perſon; he himſelf was deſerted and forſaken of God, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Is Chriſt forſaken, when the ſins of men are upon him, and ſhall men's perſons be accepted and received in reſpect of ſuch an act of theirs that carries ſinfulneſs in the face of it? Nay, that carries an univerſal leproſy in the nature of it? Suppoſe your righteouſneſs were a fulfilling of the whole law of God, if you fail but in one point, that very failing in one point, makes you guilty of the breach of all the reſt; and, when men ſtand guilty before God, ſhall they plead that which is full of guilt, to procure favour, mercy, or grace from him? No, no, the ſacrifice of God, which is accepted of him, muſt be a male lamb, and a *lamb without blemiſh*; till, therefore, you can purge your righteouſneſs, and ſeparate all iniquity from it, know that all your righteouſneſs in its own nature doth but ſeparate you from God; ſo far is it from prevailing with him.

Surely, will ſome ſay, the righteouſneſs that is performed according to the will of God, pleaſes him, and moves and melts him, and prevails with him to do this and that good to his people.

I anſwer,

I anſwer, Too many people in the world too much ſtint the will of God, ſo much ſpoken of, when they ſpeak of a righteouſneſs according to it, or a righteouſneſs to do it; what is it? It is true indeed, righteouſneſs done according to the will of God, infinitely prevails with God; but ſhew me the man that can perform it, a meer man without Chriſt? Shew me a man that ever did, or ever can do this, acting righteouſneſs according to the will of God? *Of myſelf*, ſaith *Paul*, *I can do nothing: without me*, ſaith Chriſt, *ye can do nothing*; nay, the apoſtle goes further, *How to perform that which is good*, *I find not*, Rom. vii. 18. whilſt men conceive that the will of God conſiſts only in the materials of righteouſneſs; peradventure they may think theirs is according to it; but alas the materials of righteouſneſs, are but the leaſt part of the will of God wherewith he is pleaſed: now to do an act partly with the will of God, and partly againſt it, is this to do an act according to it? To do ſomething that God calls for at your hands in ſome things, and to walk directly contrary to him in others; is this to do his will? Suppoſe for the matter, the righteouſneſs you do, be according to the will of God, that you do the thing that he calls for of you; as for inſtance, you faſt, and pray, and the like; do you think you do theſe things according to the will of God, becauſe the outward act is done? The will of God extends to the manner of doing, to the diſpoſition of the perſon that is to do, as well as to the matter: as in *Iſaiah* i. were not

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New-moons, and ſabbaths, and ſolemn aſſemblies, God's own ordinances? And was not the performance of them materially according to the will of God? Yet, nevertheleſs, God loathed this ſervice of righteouſneſs; he was weary of it, he could not bear it; there was ſinfulneſs mixed with it; *your hands are full of blood*, ſaith the Lord; and, therefore, though the things were materially according to his will, yet his ſoul abhorred them, being done amiſs.

Suppoſe men go further, than ſimply doing things according to the will of God materially; they do not only the things, but do them ſpiritually, with enlargedneſs of heart and affection; you faſt, and you faſt with bitterneſs of ſpirit, you eat bitter herbs in faſting; you mourn, and you mourn bitterly, for your tranſgreſſions; you pray, and pray zealouſly, in the heat and fervour of your ſpirits: now if all this be not done in faith, it is abominable; *without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God*; *He that comes to God, muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that ſeek him:* he that hath performed a duty, and expects from that performance, an anſwer according to his mind, he doth not do it in faith; for *we muſt do all we do in the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, ſaith the apoſtle; and *when we have done all, muſt ſay, we are unprofitable ſervants*; and it muſt be Chriſt alone that muſt prevail with the Father for us: all our righteouſneſs will prevail nothing at all with God, nor move him a jot, except it be to pull down wrath: there is not one

one act of righteouſneſs that a perſon doth, but when that is finiſhed, there is more tranſgreſſion belonging to him, than before he had performed it: and there is no compoſition, there's no buying out of evil by good doings; the doing of good doth not make a recompence for what ſin doth; we pay but our debts in doing good; ſo that as there is a new righteouſneſs performed, there is ſtill a new reckoning added to the former; by acting of righteouſneſs, you make up a greater number of ſins than before; ſo that it is only Chriſt from whom we muſt have the expectation of ſucceſs, in whatſoever thing we deſire.

In a word, let a man's righteouſneſs be never ſo exact; yet that is not according to the will of God, which hath not God's end, which he propoſeth in the doing of righteouſneſs: you ſhall find the general rule of Chriſt, and his apoſtles, to be this, that what we do, we muſt not only do it in the name of Chriſt, but alſo to the Lord, and for the Lord: *Being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, let us ſerve him in holineſs and righteouſneſs*; it is not, let us ſerve ourſelves in holineſs and righteouſneſs, but let us ſerve him; *You are bought with a price, therefore*, ſaith the apoſtle, *glorify God in your bodies, and ſpirits, for they are God's*; he doth not ſay, being bought with a price, let us now ſeek our own good, as if we were ſtill our own men; as if we had now liberty to trade for our own ſelves: you are *not your own*, and therefore not your own, becauſe you are *bought with a price*; therefore *glorify God in*

your bodies and ſpirits. It is moſt certainly true, that God having provided through Chriſt all things appertaining to life and godlineſs for his people; thereby calls them off from all ſelf-ends, and bye-reſpects in his ſervices, to have only reſpect to him in them; he hath done all that may be done for yourſelves.

But ſome may ſay peradventure, this is a way to overthrow all righteouſneſs at once: what, all that ever a man doth, though he doth it ever ſo ſpiritually, though ever ſo exactly, to no purpoſe, and in vain? Doth a man get nothing by all the righteouſneſs he performs? Then we had as good ſit ſtill, and do nothing at all, will ſome ſay.

I anſwer, This is carnal reaſoning indeed; look but into the ground of this argument, and it will diſcover nothing but the ſelfiſhneſs of the perſon that makes it: I dare be bold to ſay, that that man that will do no righteouſneſs, but ſimply for his own ſake; who if he ſhould know before hand, that his righteouſneſs will get him nothing, would therefore ſit ſtill, and do nothing; I dare be bold to ſay, he had as good ſit ſtill indeed, and do nothing: he ſerves himſelf, not God, and though he performs righteouſneſs ever ſo exactly, if he ſerves himſelf, God will never reckon that he ſerves him: when ſelf is eyed, we can never ſerve God; when our commodity and advantage be not in the thing, we will ſit ſtill.

But, beloved, though the righteouſneſs we are to perform be ſuperfluous and vain, in reſpect of any power it hath with God to move him to do us good,

good, yet it is not altogether ſuperfluous; it is moſt true, that all the righteouſneſs of man cannot prevail with God, to do us good; there is but one mover of God, the man Chriſt Jeſus, who is the only and ſole mediator. If you will have your own righteouſneſs to be your mediator with God, to ſpeak to God for you, to prevail with God for you; what is this, but to put it in the room and place of Chriſt's? What is the mediatorſhip of Chriſt elſe, but for him to come between God and man, and be the days-man to lay his hand upon both, and at once to reconcile them? and ſhall your righteouſneſs be the days-man, and lay hands upon God and man; then farewel Chriſt, and his mediatorſhip; for this is the peculiar office of Chriſt, to be man's mediator, and advocate with the Father, to prevail with him for any good for us; ſo far therefore as any perſon looks after his own righteouſneſs, to bring glad tidings from God to him, ſo far a man eſtabliſheth it in the room and place of the righteouſneſs of God; which proceeds from the ignorance of that righteouſneſs, and will in the end prove a ſtumbling-block to men, and a rock of offence to them.

All this while I deſire not to be miſtaken: ſome, it may be, will deſire to know then to what uſe this righteouſneſs of ours ſerves, ſeeing it is not of power to prevail with God. *My goodneſs extends not unto thee*, ſaith *David*; not to God, but it may to men; *my righteouſneſs extends to the ſaints of the earth, and to ſuch as excel in virtue*, Pſal. xvi.

xvi. 3. Our righteouſneſs is appointed for excellent uſes, if we could be contented with thoſe God hath ordained it unto.

Firſt, It ſerves as a real way to manifeſt our thankfulneſs to God, for what we have already received of him: in *Pſal.* ciii. *David* is excellent, *Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul! and all that is within me, bleſs his holy name:* why, what is the matter, *David? Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thy diſeaſes, who redeemeth thy life from deſtruction, and crowneth thee with loving-kindneſs and tender mercies:* mark it well, I pray, all that is within us muſt be praiſe, and nothing but praiſe; and the ground is this, God pardons our ſins, heals our infirmities, and ſupplies all our wants; in conſideration of this, all that is within us ſhould continually expreſs his praiſe.

Again, *ſecondly*, There is this uſefulneſs in it, namely, that we may ſerve our generation; and the apoſtle gives this charge, that *men ſtudy to maintain good works*, becauſe, ſaith he, *theſe things are profitable unto men*; as we may therefore do good to men, ſo according to our ability, and talent received, we muſt employ ourſelves to the utmoſt for that end and purpoſe. The heathens could ſay, *They were not made for themſelves, but for others:* therefore there is this uſefulneſs in our righteouſneſs, that others may receive benefit by it; *Let your light ſo ſhine before men, that they, ſeeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven*; that men may be drawn on to glorify God, we muſt ſhine before men in a godly converſation.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, It is uſeful, as it is the ordinance of God, wherein the Lord hath appointed us to meet with him, and wherein he will make good thoſe things which before he hath promiſed. And this is the very end and ground of our faſting, praying, and mourning in our exigencies, and extremities; not that theſe duties do at all prevail with God, or at all move him; for, it is God that moves even theſe ſervices, and all the ſpiritualneſs in us in them; and therefore he moves them in us, becauſe when we are moved by his Spirit, and according to his will, come forth to meet him where he appoints, there he will pour out himſelf in grace and love, according to his promiſe, not according to our performances. Thus, I ſay, this great objection may be anſwered eaſily, why we faſt, and pray, and mourn in adverſity, if they do us no good? I ſay, though they do us no good, yet we faſt and pray, in that the Lord ſaith, come to me, meet me in this and that ordinance, and I will come with my hands full; then, and there, I will pour out that which mine own freeneſs hath engaged me to do for you: is it not injuſtice not to meet him then? We confeſs our ſins to him, but what is the ground of forgiveneſs? not our confeſſion of ſins, not our faſtings, prayers, mourning, and tears; but *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy iniquities, for mine own name ſake, and will remember thy ſins no more.*

I will draw towards the concluſion. In a word, whoever he be that is ſelfiſh in his own righteouſneſs, and goes about to eſtabliſh it in the room of God's,

God's, labouring to procure ſome good unto himſelf thereby, and makes that righteouſneſs do that for him, that God's righteouſneſs ſhould do, ſo making an idol of it;

Firſt, He plays the moſt diſhoneſt part with God that can be. Do you profeſs yourſelves to be the ſervants of God? If you be, what diſhoneſty is there in you, that you profeſſing to ſerve him, do, notwithſtanding, by ſecret and by ſtealth, ſerve yourſelves? If an apprentice ſhould hide himſelf all day long, to earn and gain money for himſelf, might not his maſter juſtly tax him for a diſhoneſt fellow? Why doth the maſter keep him, and find him, but that all that he doth, he ſhould do for him, and not for himſelf? Are you at God's finding, or are you at your own? Miſerable are you, that are at your own: are you at God's finding then, and not at your own? What is it you ſeek for, and would get by the righteouſneſs you ſeek ſo eagerly after? The truth is, there is nothing to be gotten that you have not already; if you have Chriſt, all things are yours, and you are Chriſt's, and Chriſt is God's. Are you one of Chriſt's? A man need not work for that which is his own already; why then do you work for that which is yours already? Are you in Chriſt, or are you not? Do you work to get into Chriſt? Alas! how long might men work out of Chriſt, and work themſelves into hell at laſt? What can a man get of God by all his righteouſneſs and works, if he hath not Chriſt to get it for him? Therefore all things are yours,

becauſe

becauſe you are Chriſt's, or elſe you ſhall have nothing at all. God gives nothing of gift, and of his dear love, but as men are in Chriſt, and for his ſake; therefore you do but labour in vain, if you labour for that which is yet to be produced.

But do good to others; *When thou art converted, ſtrengthen thy brethren:* let theſe be the ends of your ſervices; work becauſe good is already made ſure to you, and not to make it ſure: when a father ſettles an inheritance upon his ſon, he makes the deed ſo, that the ſon ſhall not work for the father's means; becauſe the father hath paſſed over all that he hath to his ſon, he ſerves out of love, for what he hath already received, not for what is hoped for.

And as there is a diſhoneſty in ſelf-ſeeking; ſo, *ſecondly*, there is a foul blur caſt upon God. Beloved, if you ſhould ſee a ſervant go about the ſtreets complaining thus, Sir, help me to a little work, I muſt ſtarve except I can work for myſelf: what would you think of this man's maſter? Surely, you will ſay, he is a hard maſter, that his ſervant muſt ſtarve, except he ſeek for himſelf, and purvey for himſelf: you that ſay in your hearts, you are undone, you muſt periſh, you are loſt, except your prayers and humbling of yourſelves can get ſome ſupply; is not this a working for yourſelves? Is not this plain ſaying, there is no truſting to God, and that we muſt work for ourſelves, or elſe we ſhall periſh.

I ſhould

I ſhould come to conſider the other particulars in this text ; but time not permitting, we will wind up all in one word of application.

We now ſtand before the Lord, and, among other mercies, we expect this great mercy, ſalvation ; not only ſalvation in heaven, but ſalvation from the ſword: it is not, it muſt not be your good doings that muſt procure it ; or your repentance, that muſt bring it ; you muſt not reſt upon your performances to get it ; do all that God calls for when you are in his way ; in this reſpect be doing ; but as for your help, look up unto the hills from whence it cometh ; your help ſtands in the name of the Lord, that made heaven and earth ; and, therefore, in the expectation of help, all your buſineſs muſt lie in this, *Stand ſtill, and ſee the ſalvation of the Lord.*

SERMON

SERMON X.

A Zeal of God proves not a Man a Child of God.

ROMANS x. 2, 3, 4.

For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge: for they being ignorant of God's righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves to the righteouſneſs of God: for Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs, to every one that believeth.

THE apoſtle, in the former chapter, more plainly and fully lays down the abſolute freeneſs of the grace of God alone to peace, life, and ſalvation, than any where elſe; clearly ſhewing, that merely and only for his own good pleaſure-ſake, he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy; eſpecially in that inſtance of *Jacob* and *Eſau*, he tells us plainly, that God hath no regard in the world unto good or evil, that might be done by either of them; but, before ever they could do any ſuch thing, it is expreſsly written of them, Jacob *have I loved, and* Eſau *have I hated.*

And

And the reaſon, why God takes nothing into his conſideration, either good or evil done by the creature as a motive to his love, the apoſtle gives there, is this, *That the purpoſe of God might ſtand, according to election; not of works, but of grace*; that is, that all the world may ſee that the firſt thoughts of God, in his election, had no eye in the world unto any thing that the creature might do, which ſhould have any prevalency with him, to ſway him this way, or that way; it was not the conſideration of *Eſau*, as one that would be reſolute and peremptory in a way of ſinfulneſs, that was a motive with God to reject him; nor was it the conſideration of any propenſity in the ſpirit of *Jacob* to yield unto calling, or of any inclination in *Jacob* to glorify him being called; I ſay, none of theſe conſiderations entered into the thoughts of God, when he eſtabliſhed his love, even in election itſelf, upon *Jacob*; his thoughts were merely upon his own good pleaſure within himſelf: as if he ſhould ſee a whole heap of creatures together, and, as it were, (if I may ſo ſpeak) blindfold of any good the creature could have to move him; he picked out this, and that, and the other, without reſpect of any difference between them.

Then he comes in the cloſure of chap. ix. to ſhew how deſperately his own brethren, after the fleſh, the *Jews*, did reject this revealed will and pleaſure of God, concerning good to men; they would have ſomething conſiderable in the creature, as of prevalence to move God to do good to ſuch, rather than to ſuch a one: this very conceit, the

apoſtle

apoſtle calls a ſtumbling-block, at which they fell.

Now, leaſt he ſhould ſeem to ſpeak all this out of ſpite, or prejudice, or through the injuries they had done to him; therefore, that he might not thus be underſtood, at the beginning of this chapter he confeſſes, *That his heart's deſire, and prayer, was that they might be ſaved:* he bore no ill-will in the world to them; nay, he ſaith, *That he would be contented to be even cut off for his brethren's ſake.* And, after he had acquitted himſelf from ſiniſter reſpects, he begins to declare the truth as it is in Jeſus; and firſt he comes to tax them, and ſhew where their error lay, and grants it lay not in any defect of zeal of, or after God; *For* (ſaith he) *I bear them record, they have a zeal of God:* if this would have ſerved their turns, to be zealous for God himſelf, there was no defect in that; the apoſtle will teſtify for them, that they were exceeding cordial, and not in reſpect of themſelves, but in reſpect of God himſelf; they had not a zeal ſimply for their own baſe ends, but had an eye to God himſelf; it was *a zeal of God*, whether you conſider it as wrought by God, or as tending unto him; either way, their zeal was *a zeal of God*, a zeal after God. I know, that there may be a zeal wrought by God, in reſpect of common mercy, or in reſpect of peculiar mercy; this was a zeal of the common mercy of God.

Thus much in effect, I have ſpoken heretofore upon this text; upon which I made ſeveral enquiries: as, *firſt*, What righteouſneſs of their own

this was, which they went about to eſtabliſh. *Secondly*, What it is to eſtabliſh a man's own righteouſneſs. Which two, I have handled in my former diſcourſe upon this text. Notwithſtanding, I ſhall, at this time, ſpeak ſomething more largely concerning the *ſecond*, and ſo, if the time will permit, proceed unto the reſt of my enquiry; but, by the way, I ſhall ſpeak ſomething concerning the zeal here mentioned by the apoſtle.

Therefore, before I quit theſe words, give me leave to tell you, it is poſſible a perſon may have *a zeal of God*, and yet be far from being a believer; let that be the firſt obſervation: I ground it thus; of the *Jews* of whom *Paul* ſpeaks, he himſelf *bears record, they had a zeal of God*; but, in the next words he ſays, *they eſtabliſhed their own righteouſneſs, and did not ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of God.* A zeal of God is not ground or evidence enough that a perſon is a believer, or that he hath received, or ſubmitted himſelf to Chriſt. *Firſt*, Beloved, becauſe this may ſeem to be harſh, I beſeech you to conſider ſeriouſly, how undeniable and clear the poſition, I have laid down, is founded in the text itſelf: I ſay, there may be *a zeal of God* in an unbeliever; ſo the apoſtle bears record of theſe *Jews*; there was *a zeal of God, yet not according to knowledge*; even, when they had it, *they eſtabliſhed their own righteouſneſs*; *they did not ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of God.* I will not dwell upon this point; all that I ſhall ſay on it, is only that I may undeceive many that are very ſubject to deceive themſelves; and that I may take them off from

from a ſandy foundation; and ſo, if it be poſſible, reduce them to a rock, who are apt to build upon the ſand.

I know, beloved, it is cried up much in the hearts of many poor wretches; I ſay, cried up much, that if they have but zeal of God in their hearts, it is enough to ſerve them for ever; they are believers, members of Chriſt; and it is injurious unto the people of God, as they think, to tell them, Thoſe that have a zeal of God in their hearts, yet, for all that, may *not ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of God*; but ſtumble, at the ſtumbling-ſtone, and fall for ever.

All the difficulty, I know, lies in this, What it is for perſons to have *a zeal of God?* Or whether there be not *a zeal of God* in thoſe that are believers, which is palpably diſcerned, from that in thoſe that do *not ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of God?* I grant, there is a difference; but as this zeal of God hath reference to our righteouſneſs, or unto an obedience to the law, you will hardly find a difference. A zeal of God to ſet up God in Chriſt, to give Chriſt the preheminence in all, that nothing is to be done with him, but only by Jeſus Chriſt; to throw down every thing in the world, that offers to come in with Chriſt, to deal with the Father; I ſay, *a zeal of God*, in this kind, is not common to any perſon, that *ſubmits not to the righteouſneſs of God:* but to be zealous, that is to ſay, to be cordial, hearty, real, and that with fervency, and earneſtneſs of ſpirit, towards obedience to the commandments of God, and to have an

eye, in ſuch obedience to God himſelf, to ſeek him in it; this, I ſay, is *a zeal of God*, that is common unto ſuch as do *not ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of God*, as well as to thoſe that do ſubmit to it; therefore, as there is a community in this zeal, ſo this is not poſſibly able ſufficiently to clear up to perſons, that becauſe they are thus zealous, therefore they are the children of God, and have the righteouſneſs of Chriſt.

Theſe *Jews*, the apoſtle here ſpeaks of, (mark it well, beloved) were exceeding vehement, even in ſetting up, and promoting obedience to the commandments of God, I ſay, with an earneſtneſs of ſpirit; as when they offered to ſtone Chriſt himſelf, (the *Phariſees* I mean) it was merely out of the extremity of their zeal, and fervency of ſpirit, becauſe they conceived he was a great blaſphemer, and breaker of God's will, for making himſelf equal with God: how could they contain themſelves, ſo long as Chriſt would, as they thought, uſurp and preſume ſo far, as to take the incommunicable privileges and immunities of God himſelf? The apoſtle ſaith of himſelf, and of the reſt of the *Jews*, *If they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*; *and*, ſaith he, *though I perſecuted the church of God, yet I did it ignorantly*. All this reſults to thus much, that the meer incroaching upon God, as they underſtood, was that which put them on ſo hot, eager, and violent a revenge of God's quarrel; ſo that, I ſay, the eye may be upon God, and, for his ſake, men may be exceeding zealous, earneſt, and fervent

vent for the vindication of him, for the doing of his will revealed in the law; and yet, for all this, there may not be a ſubmitting to the righteouſneſs that is of God.

I apply it thus, There are many people in the world, to whom the mind of God, in the law, is made known, we muſt not commit adultery, *&c.* ſimply becauſe God commands this thing, they refrain from the evil; they go through all the commandments of God zealouſly; they look upon it as the will of God revealed to them, and do it for God's ſake, thus imparting his own mind; they abſtain and refrain from the evil they do, and perform the good, becauſe God requires it of them; yet all this is no argument of a perſon's being a real member of Chriſt; for all this, he may not ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of Chriſt.

Now I will add ſomething, according as I propoſed, to that which hath been heretofore ſaid unto the *ſecond* enquiry, namely, how, and wherein our righteouſneſs is eſtabliſhed in ſtead of the righteouſneſs of God. *Firſt*, then, obſerve, that theſe Phariſees *went about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs*, ſaith the apoſtle; this righteouſneſs they went about to eſtabliſh, what was it? a righteouſneſs according to the law of God; *Chriſt is the end of the law to every one that believes:* as if he had ſaid, you, in the zeal of your ſpirits, think to come to the end of the law yourſelves, but miſtake not, if you have in your eye the expectation of comfort and peace, and reſt in your

ſpirits, from the largeneſs of your ſpirits in the performance of thoſe duties; this is enough to make you miſcarry, though it be for the Lord's ſake you do it. Let me tell you, that the Lord hath ſo eſtabliſhed Chriſt, for the reſt and life of men, that if they could yield angelic obedience, be perfect throughout in obedience to the whole law of God, and not fail in one point of it; if, I ſay, from ſuch perfection of obedience they would gather up their own comfort, or conclude their own ſalvation; theſe perſons ſhould be damned, as well as thoſe that ſin ever ſo much; for God hath eſtabliſhed Chriſt, and only his righteouſneſs, to be the ſalvation of man; I ſay, only the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; that if a man were ever ſo perfect, and in reſpect of that perfection, would leave the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and lean to the perfection of his own, for his peace, and ſalvation; that man would miſcarry, and be damned.

Beloved, all I aim at is this, that you build not upon foundations that will fail you, when you come to the trial: there is (as you ſhall hear by and by, if time and ſtrength permit) abſolutely perfection enough in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt alone, for your reſt and ſecurity, that you ſhall not need to truſt to any thing you do for peace or life; this is that which God calls you to, to go forth from your own righteouſneſs, to reſt ſolely and only upon the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, if ever you mean to have comfort in this world, and in the world to come.

You

You will ſay peradventure, this is the way to deſtroy all righteouſneſs and obedience whatſoever; what, a man never a jot the better, though he be ever ſo zealous for God, although his eye and aim be after God in his zeal: to what purpoſe ſerves all this, then will you ſay?

I anſwer, The world is grown to a miſerable paſs, that obedience, zeal, and ſeeking after God, muſt be of no uſe at all, except a man himſelf be a gainer by his obedience; it is now, as it was in the time of the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 4. every one will be ready to cry out; *Who will ſhew us any good?* this is the common out-cry in the world; if any thing in the world be propoſed to men to be done, they anſwer, but what ſhall I get by it? That is the next word preſently: am I put upon ſuch, and ſuch an employment, ſaith one; but what ſhall I gain by it? As in thoſe offices of employment that carry about with them a great deal of labour and expence of time, and bring no profit in to the perſon in the office; every man will be ready to ſhun ſuch an office, nay ready to buy out ſuch employment; this is the caſe of the world, in things appertaining unto God: what doth the law call me out unto ſuch duties and employments, ſuch zeal and fervency, to be hot in theſe ſervices and duties, and to have mine eye upon God in the performance of them, and all this do me no good? I had as good ſit ſtill and do nothing. But there are ſome good common-wealths-men indeed, who you know have in reſpect of others weal, put themſelves to trouble and charge, and be ſo far

from getting, that they ſhall be loſers by their office; and yet for the common-wealths good, they will willingly put themſelves on, when they are called out to ſuch employments: and I muſt tell you, except you mind chiefly, that all the duties you perform, are for other ends and purpoſes, than your own preferment, and to benefit yourſelf thereby; namely, the ſetting forth the praiſe of the glory of God's free-grace, and the ſerving your generation in which you live, and the ſtudy of good works, becauſe they are profitable to men; I ſay, except you will fall upon the performance of duties, for the common good and benefit, without having any ſuch conceits as what ſhall accrue to you thereby; you are not perſons yet come to have that common ſpirit, and dead to the old ſpirit, as becomes Chriſtians.

I muſt tell you, and that freely, there is not any duty you perform, when you have attained the higheſt pitch, that hath any prevalency, and availableneſs to produce any, though the leaſt good to yourſelves °; I ſay it again, there is nothing you can do, from whence you ought to expect any gain unto yourſelves by doing; you ought

° The Doctor's meaning is not, that no good is enjoyed in a way of duty; for, in the former diſcourſe on this text, he not only obſerves, that our righteouſneſs is uſeful, to manifeſt our thankfulneſs to God, and by it we ſerve our generation; but it is the ordinance of God, wherein he hath appointed us to meet with him, and wherein he will make good the things he has before promiſed; and accordingly he pours out himſelf in grace and love, according to his promiſe: but the ſenſe is, that there is no virtue and efficacy in any duty performed to procure any good thing for us, or to intitle us to it; nor

ought not to ſeek to find in what you do, nor to think to bring Chriſt to yourſelves by doing; *You are not your own*, ſaith the apoſtle, *you are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your bodies, and ſpirits:* Chriſt hath redeemed us, *that we ſhould not henceforth live to ourſelves, but live to him that died for us.*

The ſcripture is marvellous plentiful in this, that no believer for whom Chriſt died, ſhould have the leaſt thought in his heart of promoting or advancing himſelf, or any end of his own, by doing what he doth: and though, as people may think, here is a marvellous diſcouragement to perſons, to do what God calls them to do, when they ſhall have nothing for it; I anſwer, when there is a ſpirit of ingenuity (as you know there is even in the world) they ſhall be induſtrious to glorify God, and do good to men, as if they did it for themſelves; they ſhall do as much for good already beſtowed, as if they were to procure it by their own doing.

Secondly, I anſwer, There can be no diſcouragement

nor ſhould we do any with this view, or expect any on ſuch an account; but ſhould perform duty without mercenary and ſelfiſh views, purely from a ſpirit of ingenuity, from a principle of love and gratitude; knowing that all good things for time and eternity are already provided in Chriſt, and are or will be beſtowed on us, through him, and for his ſake; and not on account of any duty of ours, which ought not to be put in the room of Chriſt, and made an idol of; which is the Doctor's view, in theſe and other expreſſions of the like nature. See *Chauncy's Neonomianiſm Unmaſked*, part 2. p. 256, 290, 291, *&c.* a book worthy to be read by both the friends and foes of Dr. *Criſp*; being a vindication of theſe diſcourſes of his throughout, from the falſhood, miſrepreſentations, calumnies, and objections of D. W. in his *Goſpel-truth Stated*, &c.

ment at all unto the performance of any thing God calls for at your hands, though you get nothing in the world by what you do; I ſay, there is no diſcouragement, becauſe you cannot propoſe or intend to yourſelves any poſſible gain by duty; but that, whatever it is, that is a ſpur and encouragement unto it, is already freely and graciouſly provided for you to your hand; that all your induſtry could not compaſs and bring in, either ſo certainly or ſo plentifully as the very grace of God, before the performance of any duty, hath provided and eſtabliſhed that good for you.

When you fall upon humiliation, faſting, prayer, weeping, and ſelf-denial, what do you look for? In the diverſity of judgment, ſaith one, I get this by it, prevention of many great evils hanging over my head; another ſaith, peace of conſcience, joy in the Holy Ghoſt, aſſurance of the pardon of ſin, and of reconciliation with God; theſe things would I get by attending upon ordinances, by ſerving God day and night in that way he calls me out unto: I tell you plainly, there is none of all theſe things that you do, that conduce a jot towards the obtaining of any of theſe ends you propoſe to yourſelves; all you do gets not a jot; nay, doth not concur in it.

You will ſay then, we had as good ſit ſtill, as good never a whit as never the better: he that works all day, and gets nothing more than he had in the morning, had as good ſit ſtill, and do nothing.

I anſwer, Let me tell you, the prevention of evil,

evil, if there be reality of evil in it, and the obtaining of good, if there be a reality of good, peace of conſcience, joy in the Holy Ghoſt, pardon of ſin, infallibility of miſcarriage, the light of the countenance of God; all theſe, I ſay, which you aim at, when you are encouraged to duty, are provided abundantly for you, and eſtabliſhed firmly upon you, by the meer grace of God in Chriſt, before ever you perform any thing whatſoever; to what purpoſe do men propoſe ends to themſelves, which ends are accompliſhed before their propoſition? Hath God ſettled all things pertaining to life and godlineſs in his Son Jeſus Chriſt, upon you for his own ſake, and ſettled them everlaſtingly and unchangeably upon you; that heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, before a tittle of the grant of God, made freely for his own ſake, ſhall paſs? I ſay, hath he ſettled all things, ſo that there can come nothing to make them more ſecure, than the grant of God himſelf hath made them? To what purpoſe then do we propoſe to ourſelves, the gaining of that to ourſelves by our labour and induſtry, that is already become our own before we labour a jot? There are ſome children in the world, I know, that are very vigilant and very obſerving of their parents; and their end and aim is, that by ſuch compliance their fathers may ſettle a good inheritance upon them; but, ſuppoſe a child hath manifeſted to it, that his father hath already paſſed over all his goods and land to him; and hath made a firm deed of conveyance, and cannot call it back, or

in;

in; he hath paſſed over ſo much, and ſo firmly, he is not able to add to that, that is paſſed over before-hand; will ſuch a child propoſe to himſelf, in his obedience and obſervance, the obtaining of that good his father hath already paſſed? He knows that it is paſſed already, and cannot be by any thing he doth firmer and ſtronger; he ſerves not now to get his father's lands, but he ſerves to glorify his father that ſo freely hath ſettled his land upon him. So I ſay of believers, that have the temper of Chriſt's true bred children indeed; they, in the goſpel of Chriſt, find all things that appertain to life and godlineſs; they find them all ſo paſſed over by God's goodneſs and free-grace to them, that the lions ſhall want, and ſuffer hunger, before they ſhall lack any thing that is good: muſt they now labour to gain theſe things as if they were in agitation, and as if they were yet referred to their good or evil walking; that as they ſhall walk, ſo they ſhall ſpeed? This is to argue, that God is yet to determine with himſelf, how to diſpoſe of the good things that he will beſtow upon his people, and that he gives good things according to their good or evil carriage; and ſo the goodneſs of God to his people muſt depend upon their goodneſs to him; and that as men's works will prevail with God, ſo God will pour out his bounty unto them.

But, without reſpect to good or evil, as I ſaid before, the Lord hath everlaſtingly eſtabliſhed all that ever he meant to do; and no more will he do to the end of the world to any people he hath

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choſen in his Son. The Lord in Chriſt from everlaſting hath ſet down peremptorily what he will do for you; and there are no intervening acts and carriages of yours that make any alteration in him at all to croſs out what he hath written, and to put in what he had left out; he doth nothing to his people upon conditions in them, as if he referred himſelf ſtill to thoſe conditions, and ſuſpended what he meant to do to them, till he perceived how they would carry themſelves to him.

All that I aim at is this, to let people know that it is not a vain thing to yield due obedience to any thing that God requires; though the Lord intend not, that by our obedience, we ſhall gain ſomething, which in caſe of our failing, we ſhall miſcarry of: I ſay, the Lord hath firmly eſtabliſhed upon his own people every thing that concerns their peace, comfort, and good, ſimply and merely for his ſake, without reſpect or regard to any thing they perform; that they are to do, they are not to do it with any eye to their own advantage, that being already perfectly compleated to their hands before they do any thing; but ſimply with an eye to glorify God, and to ſerve their generation, and therein to ſerve the Lord, and ſet forth the praiſe of the glory of his grace that hath done ſo abundantly for them. Oh! that men were but ſo far enlightened, to behold how graciouſly the Lord hath provided for them; that he doth not now leave himſelf in a kind of ſuſpence to deal well or ill with them, as they ſhould carry themſelves well or ill to him.

I know,

I know, the contrary to this riſes in the hearts of men that have not yet received the light of the glorious goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt; having this conceit, as if all the carriages of God to men, were according to their carriage to him; but here is no ſuch thing, this is but the eſtabliſhing of man's own righteouſneſs to expect the dealings of God to him, as he himſelf deals with God, and that, therefore, he will be righteous, that he may be happy. Oh! I beſeech you, enter ſeriouſly into your own thoughts, and conſider, whether or no this be not to bring back again the covenant of works, even to believers; namely, that it ſhall fare well or ill with them, as they obey, or diſobey, the Lord God. The apoſtle in this chapter, verſe 5. doth expreſsly tell us what the covenant of works was; *Moſes deſcribes the righteouſneſs of the law thus, He that doth theſe things ſhall even live in them*; I pray mark it well, this is the righteouſneſs of the law, that he himſelf, in the next verſe, oppoſes to the righteouſneſs of God, that he calls the righteouſneſs of faith: *Moſes deſcribes the righteouſneſs of the law thus, He that doth theſe things ſhall even live in them: but the righteouſneſs of faith ſpeaks on this wiſe; Say not in thine heart, Who ſhall aſcend into heaven? That is, to bring Chriſt from above; or, who will deſcend into the deep? That is, to bring Chriſt up again from the dead; but what ſaith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy heart, and in thy mouth, this is the word of faith that we preach.* I ſay, the covenant of works ſtands upon theſe terms, So much doing, ſo much life;

life; on the other ſide, (*Gal.* iii. 10.) *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the law to do them.* Here is the other branch of the covenant of works, ſo far as I fail in doing, ſo far muſt I be under the curſe. Now you can look for no better than wrath and vengeance from heaven, ſo long as you run on in theſe principles, and make them the foundation of your good; ſo far you make yourſelves liable to the covenant of works; no more good, comfort, peace, or reſt, but as you can do this, and that. What is this elſe, but, *Do this and live?*

I beſeech you to enter into your own hearts concerning this particular. When you yield obedience to God, you come to church, go to prayer, and fall to faſting, weeping, mourning, ſelf-denial, keeping the ſabbath, and dealing righteouſly, honeſtly, and juſtly with men; what is it you aim at in all this? That God may do you good, that he may be gracious and loving to you, that he may ſpeak peace to your ſpirits; then, it neceſſarily follows, that life is that in your eye that puts you upon that which you do, and ſo you do, that you may live; this is the righteouſneſs of the law, that righteouſneſs which is oppoſed to the righteouſneſs of faith. Now, know, that there is no ſubmitting to the righteouſneſs of God, while there is an eſtabliſhing of the righteouſneſs of the law of *Moſes*; namely, to do righteouſneſs that you may live; to refrain from evil, to the end you may not be curſed: he that propoſeth curſing or life, curſing if he do not do, or life if he do the will

will of God; he that propoſeth this, is *under the law, and not under grace.*

Chriſt, as you hear, in the next verſe, *is the end of the law for righteouſneſs, to every one that believes.* What is that? He is the end of the curſe of the law; he is the end of the life of the law; there is no curſe to be pronounced on a believer, when he breaks the law; there is no life to be expected by the believer upon his obedience to it; Chriſt is the end of the life, and curſe of the law; *He himſelf being made a curſe for us, as it is written, Curſed is every one that hangeth on a tree.* Secondly, *Our life is hid with God in Chriſt:* he is the life, no life but in the Son; *He that hath the Son, hath life; he that hath not the Son, hath not life,* ſaith the apoſtle. All this argues plainly, that all that life that is to be expected, whether it be life itſelf, or the conducing of things that appertain unto the comforts of it; all this is to be expected from the Son of God, and not from any obedience to the law. If thou, at any time, read a curſe to thyſelf, upon any tranſgreſſion of the law, and dareſt receive it againſt thyſelf, in reſpect of that tranſgreſſion, Chriſt is not the end of the law to thee; namely, thy ſoul takes not Chriſt as the full curſe of the law, taking it all away, that otherwiſe the law would pronounce and execute upon thy perſon.

Beloved, I need not apologize; you know what the apoſtle ſpeaks, (2 *Cor.* v. 19.) *God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them: and hath committed*

mitted to us the word of reconciliation; upon which (ſaith the apoſtle) *we are the ambaſſadors for Chriſt, beſeeching you, in Chriſt's ſtead, to be reconciled unto God.* I think I need not make an apology; he that is a miniſter of the goſpel ought to declare and proclaim this reconciliation to you, by God's own Son Jeſus Chriſt, peace through him, and atonement through his blood alone. Either we are the miniſters and meſſengers of Chriſt, or the miniſters of *Moſes*; we are either the miniſters of the covenant of works, or the meſſengers of the covenant of grace: ſo far as we urge upon you, as you do, you ſhall live, and as you do evil, you ſhall be accurſed; ſo far we are the miniſters of the covenant of works. But, when we come and ſay, that *God is in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf*; that is, if we ſay, that Chriſt bare the curſe, and that you need not fear it, though you fall into ſin; you may be ſure that God hath reconciled you ſo in his Son, that your falls (being believers) ſhall not break peace between God and you; this peace is everlaſting, it is unchangeable; God is not a friend to-day with his people, and falls out with them to-morrow; *whom he loves, he loves to the end*; now this is our buſineſs to draw people unto Chriſt.

And we may do ſome good to let you ſee what advantage there is in Chriſt for you; for thereby you may be induced not to eſtabliſh your own righteouſneſs againſt him, and his. We ſhall ſin every day; in many things we ſin all; but the buſineſs we are to do, is this, to let you know,

that though there be ſins committed, yet there is no peace broken; becauſe the breach of peace is ſatisfied in Chriſt; there is a reparation of the damage, before the ſin itſelf be committed: Chriſt had in his eye, and ſo had the Father too, all the damages that ſhould fall out to the end of the world, by his own people; and he did not pay a price for ſome that were preſent only, but he paid the damages of all that ſhould come after, from the time of his ſuffering, to the end of the world; he paid the uttermoſt farthing for every one at once: though, it may be, one ſin is committed to-day, another is committed to-morrow, and the other the third day; God hath reconciled himſelf to you in Chriſt, for this ſin committed to-day, and that which will be to-morrow, and ſo for all the reſt to the end of your lives, they are paid for already; this is that which will make up the peace of a believer; *The God of hope will fill us with all joy and peace in believing.* That is worth obſervation, beloved, the joy of a perſon can never be full, the peace of a man can never be compleat, as long as there is ſuſpicion; there will be quarrelling again. What ſaith the ſoul? I ſin now, and ſhall to-morrow; and, when I ſin, God will fall out with me, be angry with me, and turn away from me; I ſay, as long as there is ſuch ſuſpicion, there will never be fulneſs of peace and joy. Hence it is, that perſons, till they came to receive the goſpel of Chriſt, were, through fear of death and wrath, ſubject to bondage all their life long; but, when they come to have this peace that Chriſt hath purchaſed,

purchaſed, he having made an atonement, and given reſt, in that he hath paid all the old ſcores at once; then they may perceive, though there be this ſin committed, yet, notwithſtanding, God will not now fall out again with them; for he had an eye upon all theſe ſins, when Chriſt ſuffered, and took full ſatisfaction of his Son for this very ſin; now, though I ſin to-day, God took full ſatisfaction of his Son for the ſins of this day; nay, more, he hath acknowledged ſatisfaction for them all; *He beheld the travail of his ſoul, and was ſatisfied*, for that which is to come, as well as that which is paſt; God, in Chriſt, hath given a full diſcharge.

Look upon the account, you ſhall find that Chriſt paid and reckoned not only for ſins paſt and preſent, but for ſins committed to the end of days. Therefore, in *Dan.* ix. 24. you ſhall find this excellent propheſy, *Yet ſeventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city:* here, by ſeventy weeks he propheſies of the diſtance between the time in which he ſpake, and the time wherein Chriſt ſhould ſuffer; and what ſhould he ſuffer for? *For the finiſhing tranſgreſſion, and for the putting an end to ſin; and for the making reconciliation, and to bring in everlaſting righteouſneſs.* Mark, when theſe ſeventy weeks are ended, Chriſt is come, then there is a finiſhing of tranſgreſſion: there is a great deal of weight in the very word, the *finiſhing of tranſgreſſion:* when is a thing finiſhed? When all is done, and nothing more needs to be done or added to it. This church was finiſhed, when the lead was laid, and the win-

dows glazed, and no workman had any thing more to do: now the time of Christ's suffering was the time of finishing transgression; as much as to say, Christ made an end of sin; that is, God had no more in the world to reckon with persons for sins, after Christ in that suffering of his, had paid the full price for every transgression. Beloved, if God come to reckon now with believers for sin, either he must ask something of them, or not; if not, why are they troubled? Why must they come under the rod, as it were, to make up that which is not yet paid? How doth Christ then perfect for ever them that are sanctified? And how are they saved to the uttermost, that come to God by him? When men are saved to the utmost, there needs no more to be done; if so, you must know, that God cannot bring a new reckoning. There is not such dishonesty in any honest man in the world; he that hath taken all the debt of a surety, and given acquittance under his hand, will not come upon the principal again, a poor beggar, and tell him, "I must have something of you;" the poor man will answer him, "Sir, you have received sufficient satisfaction already of my surety;" he is not an honest man that will ask more. Christ is the surety of a better covenant; God took Christ's bond, and he paid it; and, as he took his pay, when he received it, he acknowledged he had received satisfaction, *Isa.* liii. 11. *He beheld the travail of his soul, and was satisfied:* the travail of Christ gave the Father such satisfaction, that he acknowledged he was satisfied in it; why, therefore,

fore, ſhould he come upon you again? And if God will not come upon you again, what need you fear? It is true, as ſin is contrary to the nature of God, ſo we ought with all reverence to make uſe of the help of the Spirit to oppoſe all ſin whatſoever; but for any hurt [p] which ſuch ſins ſhall do to us, it is not poſſible; for Chriſt hath made ſatisfaction; *He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, and bruiſed for our iniquities, and the chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him:* did God wound Chriſt for ſin? If he did, it was to ſome purpoſe, or to none; if it were to purpoſe, then it pleaſed the Father to wound him, that thoſe that were to be wounded might not be wounded: and hath Chriſt ſaved his people from wounding, then what need we fear that we ſhall be wounded for our tranſgreſſions?

But if we commit ſin, God will puniſh us.

I anſwer, This is to make the ſufferings of Chriſt of none effect; for, if he had not ſuffered, you could but be wounded; but if he was wounded for you, why do you diſparage his ſufferings, by this falſe jealouſy and ſuſpicion of yours? and, beſides, you will never reſt in peace all the days of your life, till you go out of yourſelves to the Lord Chriſt, and ſee fulneſs in him, and ſuch fulneſs and perfection in him, that there needs no addition to what he hath done; *In him* (ſaith the apoſtle) *dwells the fulneſs of the God-head bodily*, and *we are compleat in him*; and

[p] By hurt is meant, the hurt of puniſhment, penal evil, which Chriſt has bore and took away from his people; ſo that they ſhall never be affected with it, he having fully ſatisfied for their ſins.

is it ſo? There is no fear then, that God ſhould look upon you as abominable, loathſome things, any longer: there is inconſiſtency between a lovely perſon, and an ugly loathſome one; you are compleat in Chriſt; now, being compleat in him, you are lovely in the ſight of the Father: in *Ezek.* xvi. the prophet tells us, *And thy beauty became perfect through my comelineſs that I put upon thee.* Here is a perſon in blood, in a loathſome condition; but, for all this, as loathſome as he is in himſelf, and in his own nature; yet here is perfection of beauty, and that through the comelineſs of Chriſt: now can the Lord abhor that which hath perfection of comelineſs in it? Whoſoever is in Chriſt, hath all the comelineſs of Chriſt upon him; now as you look out of yourſelves, and your filthineſs, and look upon yourſelves as you are in him; ſo you ſhall have not only reſt and peace, but joy, and joy unſpeakable and glorious, as in *Iſa*, xxxv. 10. an excellent place; *The ranſomed of the Lord ſhall return to* Sion *with ſongs, and everlaſting joy upon their heads; they ſhall obtain joy, and gladneſs, and ſorrow, and ſighing ſhall flee away.* Some interpret theſe words of the glory in heaven; but it is returning to *Sion*, and not returning to heaven; *Sion* is the church of God upon earth; they return to *Sion*, that is, they return to Chriſt in his church upon earth; they ſhall return with ſongs, and everlaſting joy; and they ſhall obtain joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and ſighing ſhall flie away.

This is not impoſſible, you will ſay; but you know

know many of the people of the Lord Jeſus, that walk ſadly and diſconſolately, not having this joy and gladneſs.

I anſwer, There is nothing hinders the joy of God's people, but their ſins; theſe, as they conceive, ſtand as a ſeparation between God and them; oh! they ſtand as a cooling card in all their joys and mirth; but when they return to *Sion*, they ſhall rejoyce in that they ſhall ſee, that the blood of Jeſus Chriſt the Son of God hath cleanſed them from all ſin; in that the Lamb of God hath taken away all their ſins; the ſcape-goat having carried them away into the land of forgetfulneſs; in that all their tranſgreſſions are blotted out as a cloud, and God will remember their ſins no more; in that they are all fair, having no ſpot before the Lord in them: when they ſhall come, by the ſight of the glory of the goſpel, and the light thereof, to behold this eſtate that Chriſt hath brought them into; then all matter of ſorrow and ſighing ſhall flie away, and the bitterneſs of it ſhall be taken away; and then that which was the occaſion of that bitterneſs ſhall vaniſh too.

I do not ſay, that he is no believer that hath not this perfectly; far be it from me to ſay ſo; there are that are believers that are weak; and there are believers that are ſtrong in faith. The more the light and glory of the goſpel ſhines in the true intention of God to his people; the more ſhall they return to their reſt, the more ſhall they have joy and gladneſs.

Why then, may not a believer ſay as *David* did,

The Lord hath been very bountiful to me, that I may return to my reſt; God hath done every thing in Chriſt, and taken away all things that can diſturb my peace and comfort.

SERMON XI.

God remembers not our Sins.

ISAIAH xliii. 25.

I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for mine own ſake, and will not remember thy ſins.

TO have an evangeliſt, a day-ſtar, to be viſited in lightſome times, though it be a matter of great grace; yet is it not cauſe of ſo great admiration, as to have the ſun ſhining in a dark night is matter of wonder; and yet there was a ſpiritual eye among the *Jews*, that was able to ſee (in their darkeſt days) a glorious ſun in their firmament; this eye was this evangeliſt *Iſaiah*. I rather call him an evangeliſt than a prophet, for his bringing glad tidings of good things, tidings of exceeding great joy. The apoſtle *Paul* himſelf, the great doctor of the Gentiles, and the main exalter of Chriſt and the grace of God in him, goes not beyond this evangeliſt; ſpeaking ſo fully, clearly,

clearly, and ſweetly of the freeneſs of God's love, even while perſons are in the loweſt and worſt of conditions.

Beſides all other expreſſions of his, this very text that I have read unto you is enough to make him an evangeliſt indeed; for here he evangelizes, or preaches the gladdeſt tidings that ever could come to the ſons of men; for herein he proclaims liberty to the captives, and binds up the broken-hearted. This very expreſſion of his, is one of the greateſt cauſes, that *the ranſomed of the Lord ſhall return to* Sion *with ſongs, and everlaſting joy upon their heads; and that they do obtain joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and ſighing fly away*; as the ſame prophet hath it in chap. xxxv. 10.

Now that we may ſee more fully, the ſweetneſs of marrow, and of wine well refined on the lees, contained in this text; it will be of very great importance and concern, to underſtand clearly and fully to whom, or of whom, the Lord by this prophet ſpeaks theſe words. It is true, a pardon is a welcome thing to a condemned malefactor; but a pardon for this man, when another that goes to execution hath none, is ſo far from being a comfort to him that ſuffers, that it doth but augment his miſery and torment.

If the Lord for his own ſake blots out the iniquity of ſuch and ſuch, and not the iniquity of others, it is but the augmentation of the miſery of that perſon that hath no ſhare in it.

In verſe 4. the Lord mentions *Jacob* indeed, but, in the ſequel, he makes it appear, that he intends

tends not *Jacob* according to the fleſh, but after the ſpirit; for this *Jacob* and *Iſrael* are that company and aſſembly of people, that are brought together from the ends of the earth; from the eaſt, weſt, north, and ſouth, as we have it expreſſed in verſe 5, 6. But, beloved, that you may ſee plainly who this *Jacob* and *Iſrael* are, obſerve but one expreſſion in verſe 7. *Thou that art called by my name*, ſaith the Lord; theſe are the perſons whoſe iniquities the Lord blots out; what name is that? The name of *The Lord thy Saviour*, verſe 11. Now there is no people in the world, nor the *Jews* themſelves; that had ſo plain a name of their Saviour upon them, as we have that are Gentiles, that are chriſtians; we have the true name of Chriſt a Saviour upon us, chriſtians from Chriſt.

And leaſt people ſhould think, that when the Lord proclaims this grace in the text, of blotting out iniquity and tranſgreſſion, he looks for ſome qualifications and diſpoſitions, that may be amiable to win ſo much grace from him; do but obſerve, I pray, (and it is very obſervable indeed) the two or three verſes before my text; you ſhall ſee plainly how careful the Lord is to take off all ſuch conceits from men, all imagination of any ſuch expectation. There muſt be firſt graciouſneſs, they muſt be firſt well qualified, and then their iniquities ſhall be blotted out, ſo might ſome think; mark how the Lord takes it off; for in theſe two verſes, he draws to the very life, the qualifications and conditions of thoſe, whoſe iniquities he blots out; mark them well, *Thou haſt*

not

not called upon me; thou haſt been weary of me; thou haſt bought me no ſweet cane with money, neither haſt thou filled me with the fat of thy ſacrifices; thou haſt made me to ſerve with thy ſins; thou haſt wearied me with thine iniquities: and then upon theſe words follows the text; *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thine iniquities for mine own ſake; and will not remember thy ſins.* Mark, the words [*thy tranſgreſſions*] have reference to the perſons ſpoken of before, *that haſt not called upon me; thy tranſgreſſions, that haſt been weary of me; thy tranſgreſſions, that haſt wearied me; and thy tranſgreſſions, that haſt made me to ſerve with thy ſins.*

So that the point from hence is this; *That the Lord, for his own ſake, blots out the tranſgreſſions, and remembers not the ſins, even of thoſe that have not called upon him, that have been weary of him, and wearied him, and made him ſerve with their tranſgreſſions.*

I make no queſtion, but that this doctrine, I have laid down, will be received of all that will but receive clear ſcripture; I have not added one tittle in it more than is expreſſed in the words themſelves; and therefore I ſhall be the more bold to build upon ſuch a rock as this is.

That we may the better come to the words, or rather, to our comfort in them, we have theſe particulars very obſervable.

Firſt, The grace held out to theſe perſons; and that is expreſſed by two phraſes. *Firſt*, The *Lord blots out thy tranſgreſſions.* Secondly, *will not remember thy ſins.*

Secondly,

Secondly, Beſides the grace held forth, let us conſider the original or fountain from whence it ſprings; it is *I, even I*, ſaith the Lord, *the Lord of hoſts, the God of* Iſrael, *thy Saviour*; for ſo you have it expreſſed all along the chapter.

Thirdly, You may conſider here the motive that prevails with God, to extend this grace that he ſhews to his people, and that is a remarkable paſſage; the motive is not in, nor from the creature; it hath its ſpring and riſe immediately from himſelf alone; *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions; for mine own ſake I do it.*

Finally, you may conſider to whom this grace is extended; that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions, ſaith the text, and will not remember thy ſins; that is, to thoſe perſons mentioned before, of which I have ſpoken, that had wearied him with their ſins; of theſe briefly.

Firſt, Concerning the grace that the Lord is pleaſed to hold forth to his people here, namely, *The blotting out their tranſgreſſions and not remembering their ſins. Firſt*, let us conſider what it is for the Lord to blot out tranſgreſſions: it is an uſual phraſe in the ſcripture, and imports much comfort in it; it is an alluſion, or an allegorical expreſſion; wherein the Lord is pleaſed to hold forth his love to man, after the manner of men; to ſet forth his carriage to men, according to theirs one to another. It is a phraſe borrowed from the practice of men, that keep their debt-books, wherein they enter, and record the ſeveral debts men owe them; that ſo, for the better help-

ing

ing of their memory, they may find what is due, and know what to demand and call for; I ſay, the Lord here ſpeaking of *blotting out of tranſgreſſions*, hath reference to ſuch debt-books, wherein he hath recorded the ſeveral debts, or ſins, which he enters as men commit them; now the blotting out is nothing elſe, but that, whereas there were ſuch and ſuch tranſgreſſions in the record of God, he draws a blot over them. And that he here hath reference to ſuch kind of dealing, in blotting out tranſgreſſions, you may ſee clearly manifeſted unto you, in *Col.* ii. 14. where this phraſe of blotting out, is explained: *You being dead in your ſins, hath he quickened, together with Chriſt, having forgiven you all treſpaſſes*; now mark what follows; *blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances which was againſt us, and was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his croſs:* what *the hand-writing of ordinances* there is, you may plainly perceive by the words going before, namely, *All our treſpaſſes, and all our ſins.* Now the taking away of ſin, is called a *blotting it out*, and expreſſed thus; *The blotting out of the hand-writing that was againſt us*, becauſe they were, as it were, written down; but the Lord hath razed and blotted them out. You are not to conceive that there are really ſuch things with God, that he did indeed keep a book, and enter down in it all the ſeveral actions of men, and ſo calling men to account, will open it, and will read out the ſeveral things there written; but the phraſe is only an alluſion ſpoken for our better capacity. And,

And, for this cauſe, you ſhall find the ſcripture frequently makes mention of ſuch books God hath. When the ſeventy diſciples came to Chriſt, rejoycing that the devils were made ſubject unto them, he replies, *Rejoyce not that the devils are made ſubject unto you, but rejoyce, rather, that your names are written in the book of life.* Here is a book, and the names of the diſciples written in it; but, if you will mark *Rev.* xx. 12. you ſhall find, there is not only the book of life, but other books beſides, out of which, the dead, both ſmall and great, were judged, according to their works that they had done; as if he had ſaid, beſides the book of life, there is the book of works, wherein the ſeveral actions of men are recorded, by which, at the great day, men are to be judged as they are found in them; according to the ſeveral debts that are therein, they are to receive their ſentence. Mark now, for the better apprehenſion of our weak capacity, the Lord hath taken up ſuch a kind of illuſtration of his dealing with men; namely, by recording our debts in books; yet, he tells us for our comfort, that, though there be ſuch books, we need not fear; though they ſhall be opened, yet whatſoever was written in them, in reference to us, is all croſſed and blotted out; and, when we come to account, there ſhall be nothing reckoned unto us, as a fault.

For the better illuſtration of this, that what comes after may be the clearer, you muſt underſtand, that, though it be true in the ſucceſſion of ages, the ſeveral members of Chriſt do ſeverally

day

day after day commit now ſome, then more, and afterwards more tranſgreſſions; though this be actually done in ſucceſſion of time, yet the all-ſeeing eye of the Lord looks over all, that ever ſhould be done, from all eternity; and then, as it were with himſelf, writes down the ſeveral actions and tranſgreſſions of men, that afterwards ſhould be committed; he regiſters them at firſt with himſelf, and this is all the book that God keeps, and all the entries of actions with him. Now, whereas the Lord in his eternal fore-ſight took notice of every action that you and I have done, do, or ſhall do hereafter; he alſo took notice of the nature and quality of ſuch actions; yet, when he had done, he drew a croſs over them all: for, though he ſaw theſe things thus done, yet he took a courſe that he would be another way ſatisfied for every thing he could demand in reſpect of them; and ſo they ſhould remain no longer upon the heads of thoſe perſons. As for example, Suppoſe a man owes, upon a bill of parcels, an hundred pounds; all theſe parcels are written in a book under his name upon his head; after a time a ſurety comes and takes all this debt, and enters it upon his own head, under his own name, he being an able man: upon this, the creditor is pleaſed to take him for his debtor, and ſo tranſcribes every parcel of the debt, from the head of the principal debtor, unto the head of this ſurety. Now, after all theſe parcels are entered to the head of the ſurety, by-and-by a croſs is drawn over the firſt head, whoſe debt it was before, untill it was brought

brought over unto the ſurety; this is the *blotting out of tranſgreſſion*, which the Lord here ſpeaks of: and the ſenſe of it is no more but this, though it is true, I know it well enough what thou haſt done, and all thou haſt done againſt me, how many and how great tranſgreſſions thou haſt committed, and hereafter ſhalt commit; though they be all open before me; though thou art the doer of all theſe, and I know it; *yet*, ſaith the Lord, *I will blot out all:* that is, there is not any one of all theſe to be reckoned for upon thy head; but I have paſſed them all upon another's; and he hath made to me, and I have acknowledged, full ſatisfaction; I have no more to ſay to thee.

Here, then, is the ſum of this dart of the free grace of God, *the blotting out of tranſgreſſion*; you know, beloved, the uſe of writing debts in a book, namely, that a creditor may turn over at pleaſure or leiſure to them; and ſo, when he looks there, he may find what every perſon owes, and, at diſcretion, may take the ground-work of his action that he lays againſt a perſon; and upon this action arreſt him, and lay him up in priſon, till he pays the debt: and, likewiſe, you know what the end of this *blotting out* too is; namely, that when men come to look over their books, they may ſkip over what was written; and, when the book is looked over, no notice ſhall be taken of ſuch a man's name, who, though he was entered in it, yet all is blotted out again; and imports to us thus much, to the thing in hand, that though the Lord, according to the uſual manner of taking notice of

actions

actions againſt men, hath his time when he will take notice of theſe debts, when he enters the debtor, when he will arreſt and clap him up for them; yet, when he ſhall look over his book, he ſhall take no notice of ſuch perſons whoſe parcels are croſſed out. Therefore, in *Jer.* l. 20. ſee how the prophet alludes to this expreſſion, and how he explains the words *blotting out of tranſgreſſion: In thoſe days, and at that time, ſaith the Lord, ſhall the iniquities of* Iſrael *be ſought for, and there ſhall be none; and the ſins of* Judah, *and they ſhall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I reſerve.* Here he ſeems to repreſent the Lord as one that begins to look over his books, to ſee what debts are owing unto him; as if he were making a ſearch: well, ſaith the Holy Ghoſt, though at ſuch a time the ſins of this people be ſought for, yet there ſhall be none; it is true, they were all entered into the knowledge of God from all eternity, yet there ſhall be none; that is, though they were entered, they are blotted out again; therefore, as it is in a debt-book, though there be never ſo many parcels entered, entered ever ſo truly there, yet, when once that which was entered is blotted out, there is no more debt, than if there had never been any; for all that was ever in, is blotted out. So, though the Lord be privy to what they do, and hath recorded them in his own thoughts; yet he himſelf draws a blot upon them, and makes them to be nothing; whereas before, till the blot was drawn over them, they were real debts.

And this he doth not ſimply in reſpect of for-

giveneſs ; in regard of us, it is true, it is a forgiveneſs ; yet, in reſpect of him, it is not merely forgiveneſs : for the reaſon and ground of blotting out of iniquity, is, there is a ſecond head to which theſe debts are tranſlated from us, that ſhall pay them better than thoſe whoſe firſt they were ; ſo, that the debt being paid, God loſeth nothing ; foraſmuch as that another hath paid all.

This is one of the moſt admirable pieces of grace, that thirſting ſouls can deſire ; if they had all they could wiſh themſelves. Do but think ſeriouſly upon it ; ſuppoſe a man is privy to himſelf of murther, felony, and treaſon, or what elſe you will ; ſuppoſe he knows that it is known, and that there are many witneſſes to atteſt it ; nay, ſuppoſe he knew it were done in the eye and face of the judge himſelf, that he ſaw with his own eyes what was done, and that, when all this is done, he ſhould be drawn to his trial ; alas ! in what perplexity of heart would this man be ? How would he quake and tremble, and be even at his wits end ? He knows it was publickly done, there is no ſmothering of it, but that he muſt juſtly lie under condemnation for it ; the witneſſes come in and ſwear point-blank againſt him ; and yet ſuppoſe, after all pleadings, and bitter expectation of the ſentence, the judge himſelf ſhould ſtand up and ſay, I have made ſearch, and there is not one bill of indictment found againſt this man ; there is not one action that may juſtly be laid againſt him ; and I have nothing to ſay to him, or againſt him : how will this make the heart of ſuch a priſoner

ſoner leap for joy, being ſo acquitted and diſmiſſed, and having no bill found againſt him! Juſt ſo is our caſe; we have committed murther, felony, treaſon, rebellion, and enmity, all that can be againſt the Lord; we did it in the face of God, that he knows it is done; but, when we come to trial, God himſelf brings in an *ignoramus*; he himſelf ſaith, Here is not one bill of indictment againſt him; there is nothing but what is blotted out; and the reaſon is, as I ſaid, becauſe he acknowledgeth that he hath received a ſatisfaction from his Son; *Deliver him, for I have found a ranſom*, Job. xxxiii. 24. So much for that phraſe, *I am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions:* it followeth, *And will not remember thy ſins:* here is the *ignoramus* that God himſelf makes; though the fore-man of the grand-jury bring in an indictment; yet, ſaith God, I remember no ſuch matter: here is a plea againſt this and that man, (members of Chriſt, you muſt ſuppoſe them all this while) they are accounted for ſuch and ſuch ſinners and tranſgreſſors, but I remember no ſuch matter, ſaith the Lord.

But what is it for God not to remember the tranſgreſſions of men in this kind, will ſome ſay?

I anſwer, beloved, Here the Lord ſpeaks after the manner of men, as he did before; books, you know, are the regiſters of memory, or records for the help of memory rather: when a man comes to his book, to his bills and bonds, and there reads what ſuch and ſuch a man owes, he thereby remembers what debts are due unto him, and from

whom; but if he comes to his book, and there can read nothing owing unto him from ſuch a perſon; he is ſaid not to remember it, ſo that memory itſelf fails; can this man now remember his debts that cannot find that he hath any ſuch, that cannot read them? If a man look over his debt-book, and finds there, that though ſuch debts were written, yet now they are ſo obliterated that no man can read them, and that this blotting was made not caſually, but upon conſideration of a ſufficient ſatisfaction; how then, can he remember theſe now as debts? Thus the Lord repreſents himſelf to us, he remembers not our ſins; that is, the tranſgreſſions of the members of Chriſt come not into the thoughts of God, ſo as now to think that ſuch and ſuch a man ſtands guilty before him of ſuch a tranſgreſſion; I ſay, the Lord hath not in his thought any ſuch thing concerning any member of Chriſt. Beloved, you ſhall find it a frequent expreſſion of the Holy Ghoſt, manifeſting the grace of God to his own people; namely, *God doth not remember their ſins: David* in *Pſal.* xxv. 9. prays thus, *Lord, remember not the ſins of my youth:* but look into the covenant of grace, wherein God engages himſelf to be the God of his people; this is the cloſure and ſhutting up of it, in *Jer.* xxxi. 31. and ſo on; *In thoſe days, and at that time, will I make a covenant with the houſe of* Iſrael, *not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers; but this ſhall be the covenant that I will make with them*, &c. And then the ſhutting up of the new covenant is in theſe words,

words, *Their ſins and iniquities will I remember no more.*

So the apoſtle, *Heb.* viii. 12. repeats the ſelf-ſame thing, repeating the covenant word for word; and ends it with the ſame cloſure, *Your ſins and iniquities I will remember no more.* And in *Heb.* x. 16, 17. Though the apoſtle abridges the covenant, and leaves out many branches of it, yet he forgets not the laſt clauſe of it, *Their ſins and iniquities I will remember no more.*

So it ſtands for a truth, the people of God are ſo received into the grace and favour of God, that God doth not, nay, he will not remember their ſins any more from the time that they are become members of Chriſt, and actually in covenant with him; from that time for ever more, there is not once a bringing to remembrance with God any one of their tranſgreſſions.

But ſome will, This ſeems to be ſtrange; what, God not remember the ſins of believers? Suppoſe he forgives them, yet he muſt remember them, ſeeing they are committed every day ſo clearly and conſpicuouſly in his ſight; how is it poſſible he ſhould not remember them?

I anſwer, beloved, Let fleſh and blood reaſon and ſay what it will, I aſk you this queſtion, is it the Lord himſelf that ſays, he doth not remember the ſins of his people? If he himſelf ſpeaks it, who art thou, O man, that dareſt queſtion whether he remembers them, or no? Shalt thou ſay, he remembers their ſins, when he himſelf ſaith, he will not remember them? The apoſtle *Paul*

tells us, *No man knows the things of God, but the Spirit of God:* doth not the Spirit of God tell us this, that *he doth not remember their ſins?* And can any man know the things of God better than the Spirit? Thou ſayeſt that God remembers them, when he ſaith, he doth not remember them.

But ſome will be ready to ſay further, How can this poſſibly be, that God ſhould know every ſin that the believer commits, and the believer himſelf knows the ſins he commits, and yet God ſhould not remember them?

I anſwer, *Firſt*, Suppoſe I could not unty this knot, or reſolve this riddle to you; you muſt know, beloved, there are deep things of God, that none but he himſelf can dive into, that none but he is able to reſolve; yet, though it could not be reſolved, let God be true, and all the world be liars; let not the world's ſaying, God remembers the ſins of his people, prevail againſt his ſaying, *I will not remember their ſins:* let ſenſe, argument, reaſon, and all ſtoop to faith, even for the teſtimony of God's ſake alone, though none will ſpeak the ſame thing, but meerly the voice of God himſelf.

But, *Secondly*, Let us ſee whether we can unty this knot or no: how is it poſſible that the Lord ſhould not remember their ſins, ſeeing they are ſo plain to him every moment? There is one word in the text, that is not much heeded, and it is that which muſt reſolve this great and difficult queſtion; and that is this, *I will not remember*

your

your *ſins*, *I will not remember them as* your *ſins*, putting the emphaſis upon the word *your*; and will not remember *thy* ſins, or *your* ſins. It is moſt certainly true, God remembers all the actions that ever men have done, do, or ſhall do; he remembers the nature and quality of all actions as they are; he remembers ſuch actions, as done at ſuch times; and he knows they are thus and thus in the nature of them; and yet ſo it is, that *he remembers not* thy *tranſgreſſions*; that is, tho' he remembers the things thou haſt done, yet he doth not remember them as they are thine; he remembers the things, its true, but not that they are thine; for he remembers perfectly that they are none of thine; he remembers whoſe they are, he himſelf hath paſt them over, he decreed that they ſhould become the ſins of Chriſt; and when he paſſed them over to him, they ceaſed to be thine any longer.

You know that text in *Iſa.* liii. 6. *He hath laid on him the iniquities of us all*; and you know that place in 2 *Cor.* v. 21. *He was made ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* Now I aſk this queſtion, Whoſe are the ſins that believers commit? When Chriſt became their ſin, are they not his? and if they are his, are they any longer theirs, that did commit them? 2 *Cor.* v. 19. ſhews plainly, that the Lord reckons them no longer theirs, when he hath made them once to be Chriſt's; *God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them*; as much as to ſay,

I will never reckon them thine any more; I will never impute them to thee; all that I look for in reſpect of thy ſins, I look for it at the hands of Chriſt; *for he was made ſin for us*, ſaith the text.

And whereas people think it ſtrange, for as much as believers themſelves do remember their ſins, that God ſhould not remember them; I anſwer, if any believers or members of Chriſt remember their ſins any otherwiſe than God remembers them, their memory fails them, and they are miſtaken in their remembrance; if when believers have ſinned, they have a conceit that their ſins ſhall be charged upon them; the truth is, they have other conceits of themſelves than God hath of them; but if they will remember their ſins, as he remembers them, they muſt remember them, and know them by the light of God's Spirit, that ſhall lead them into all truth. The Spirit of God will remember them of them indeed, and lay before them ſuch and ſuch actions, and tell them, that they have theſe pollutions in them, and will convince them of the abhorrency of them; but the ſame Spirit will remember them withal, that the *Lamb of God hath taken away all theſe ſins of theirs*; and that the ſcapegoat hath carried them away from them into a land of forgetfulneſs; thus, I ſay, the Holy Ghoſt, as it brings their ſins to their remembrance, ſo it will ſuggeſt to them alſo, to whom theſe ſins are ſent.

Beloved, it is matter of admirable grace, full of wonder, yea, even of amazing conſolation, that

that a poor ſoul condemned by ſatan, nay, it may be, by his own conſcience, ſhould at laſt hear the Lord ſpeak, and the laſt words of God himſelf to be this, *I remember no ſuch thing:* now if God himſelf doth not remember your tranſgreſſions, you that are the members of Chriſt, it is no matter who remembers them; he that ſhall be the judge of quick and dead at the laſt day, will not remember them; and therefore, as the apoſtle ſaith in another caſe, ſo you may ſay with comfort in your own ſpirits; *To me it is a very ſmall thing to be judged of you, or of man's judgment*, 1 Cor. iv. 3. beloved, he that hath ſaid it, will ſtand to it, he will never remember yours ſins any more; tho' they be never ſo many, or never ſo great, he will never call one of them to remembrance: it may be in affliction, and when the rod of God is fallen upon thee, thy heart will be ready to raiſe ſuch thoughts as theſe in thee; *Now God will be even with me*; *now ſhall I ſmart for my tranſgreſſions*; but know this, that at that inſtant when God brings afflictions upon thee, he doth not remember any ſin of thine; they are not in his thoughts; for the text ſaith not only of the preſent inſtant, that God doth not remember them, but of the future alſo, nay, of the everlaſting future; *Your ſins, and your iniquities, I will remember no more.*

I beſeech you, conſider this one thing, you that think that God plagues and puniſhes you, being believers, for ſuch and ſuch ſins of yours, and ſay, doth he not now remember theſe ſins of mine? Doth

Doth he puniſh ſuch and ſuch ſins in others, and take vengeance for them, and doth he not remember them? Doth he uſe to do things hand over head? Doth he lay his rod and his ſcourge upon them, and never think of the cauſe of it? And if theſe afflictions be the judgment of God for theſe ſins, certainly God muſt remember them, and ſo know them as motives and provocations, to inflict ſuch vengeance upon them; and if he puniſhes them for them, certainly he now remembers them: and what of all this? Is it a truth that God hath ſpoken, *Your iniquities and your ſins will I remember no more?* Then, ſurely, whatſoever things befall the children of God, are not puniſhments for ſin, nor remembrances of ſin; the Lord muſt be true and faithful in his covenant; and therefore, if men ſhall cavil againſt this free-grace of God, yet let me requeſt this of you, let the evidence of the Holy Ghoſt ſo prevail with your ſpirits, that if any creature in heaven or earth, men or angels, ſhall endeavour to contradict this, let them be accounted as they deſerve; let all give way to this truth; if any thing in the world can make it appear to the contrary, then let it go away with it; but if the Spirit of God ſpeaks it ſo clearly, that nothing can be objected againſt it; let not any thing cauſe thee to live in ſo much darkneſs and uncomfortableneſs, as thou muſt do, till thou receive this grace of the Lord.

And, ſo beloved, I have done with the *ſecond* thing. There is one thing more very conſiderable, and that is what the motive is, that prevails with God,

God, that thy ſins and iniquities ſhould be blotted out, and that he ſhould not remember them; what is it that moves him to do this? I find that the channel of mens hearts run uſually this way; Oh! When God beholds my mourning, weeping, and reformings, and knows I am returned unto him by true repentance, and ſeeth what moan I make, and what a pitiful wretch I am, when he beholds my groanings and my meltings; oh! this cannot but move him to pity me, and to pardon my ſins! Oh beloved! know the Lord hath other manner of motives to prevail with him, than all the rhetorick of miſery in the creature can poſſibly be to perſwade him to this grace; I ſay peremptorily, it is not all the ſighings, groanings, mournings, faſtings, prayers, and ſelf-denial; nor all the righteouſneſs that men can return to God, that can prevail with him, to blot out their ſins and to remember them no more; but the motive is this, *I, even I, for mine own ſake do this*; and the Holy Ghoſt frequently expreſſes it in ſuch terms as this, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 32. after he had laid down the covenant of grace, he concludes with this caution; *Be it known unto you, not for your ſakes do I this to you; be aſhamed and confounded for your own ways, O houſe of* Iſrael: mark it, there is nothing in the creature moves God to ſhew compaſſion upon him; but meerly for his own ſake doth he this to his people.

But, how is it, for his own name ſake to do it? I anſwer, It imports two things; *firſt*, The Lord doth it for his own ſake, that is, he is ſolely moved

to

to it, by and from himſelf; and there is no creature in the world doth ſo much as move him to it; I ſay, the Lord when he blots out the tranſgreſſions of his people, he is not ſo much as moved to it, and ſought unto for it; there is nothing in the creature to move God to it; but ſimply of his own meer motion he does it; and this the apoſtle expreſſes in abundant fulneſs, *Eph.* i. 9. where, (ſpeaking of redemption) he tells expreſsly, that the Lord did all according to his own *good purpoſe that he had in himſelf.*

But, ſome will ſay, You will grant this, that Chriſt moved God to blot out tranſgreſſions.

To this I anſwer, That though Chriſt moved God to blot them out, yet this ſtands firm ſtill, that we do not move him to do it.

Secondly, I anſwer, when we ſay, that Chriſt moves God to blot out tranſgreſſion, I do not ſeparate him from Chriſt; *God is in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf*; what he doth in grace to the poor creature, he doth in Chriſt; and he doth nothing of grace to ſinners, abſolutely conſidered in himſelf, abſtractively from Chriſt, but as in him.

But, *Thirdly*, take Chriſt for mediator, and as he is diſtinguiſhed from the Father, and then, I ſay, that he, as mediator, did not firſt move God to blot out tranſgreſſions; but the motion within himſelf, from eternity, was the root and fountain of all; yea, even of Chriſt himſelf as mediator; and from this fountain was he raiſed up to accompliſh theſe things that firſt were in his breaſt;

for

for Chriſt is the mediator ; that is, he is the mean between God and us, to compoſe this great thing of blotting out our tranſgreſſion. Now, know, that the means are raiſed up for the bringing about the thing intended ; and in nature are after the thing intended as the end : the ſchool-men have a ſpeech, " The end of things is always the " firſt in intention, though it be laſt in execution ;" if a man builds a houſe, he firſt propoſeth to himſelf to what purpoſe it is ; it is to dwell in : the habitation is firſt in his thoughts, and then the ſtructure as a means is raiſed afterwards to that end ; ſo the Lord ſits down, and conſults with himſelf, how he may ſhew himſelf in grace to the creature thus ; The creature will ſin, *and I will blot out their tranſgreſſions* ; but how ſhall it be done ? Well, ſaith God, I will ſend Chriſt into the world ; he ſhall be born of a woman, and die for their ſins, having them laid upon him, and ſhall purchaſe their redemption : now Chriſt is the means, he is made a mediator ; but God's determination, concerning the blotting out of tranſgreſſion, was of his own motion, before there was ſuch a thing as Chriſt, I mean in both his natures ; and Chriſt, therefore, came, becauſe God had determined in his own thoughts, that ſuch a thing ſhould be done by him.

Secondly, God doth this for his own ſake, not only of his own meer motion, but for his own end too, for himſelf. We are apt to think that he blots out our tranſgreſſions, that he might do good to us, that we might be made happy by it : it is true,

true, the Lord blotted out tranſgreſſions that we might be happy, but yet this is but the ſubordinate end to him, and ſtands in ſubordination to a ſupreme and higher end; God aims at his own glory principally; he did not therefore blot out tranſgreſſions that we might be the better for it principally; but that he might attain the thing that concerned himſelf in it.

And, therefore, whereas the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaks in the text of *blotting out tranſgreſſions for his own name ſake*, he adds theſe words to it, (fore-ſhewing that God aimed at himſelf more than any thing concerning the good of his creature, 1 *Sam.* xii. 22.) *The Lord will not forſake his people for his great name ſake.* Joſh. vii. 9. *What wilt thou do unto thy great name*, if thy people ſhould ſin? he ſpeaking of it then in that buſineſs of the men of *Iſrael*'s falling before the men of *Ai*. The great argument of *Joſhua*, to prevail with God, was the great name of God. *Pſal.* lxxix. 9. *Help us, O Lord, for the glory of thy name, and deliver us, and purge away our ſins for thy name ſake:* the meaning is this; the Lord blots out tranſgreſſions for his own ſake, that is, he therefore blots them out that his own name and glory might be the more magnified and exalted in the world; ſo that for his own praiſe-ſake, he doth the great things he doth. Therefore the apoſtle, in *Eph.* i. 6. ſpeaking of redemption, tells us, what the great end of it was, namely, *To the praiſe of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*

Now

Now you ſee what it is for God to blot out tranſgreſſions for his own ſake; namely, that he might have the praiſe of the glory of his own grace in doing ſuch marvellous things as he doth; ſo that you run in a vain courſe to think that you move God by your importunity and humbling yourſelves hefore him; for he will not be moved with all theſe to blot out your tranſgreſſions; if ever, therefore, you would find a motive whereon to reſt indeed ſatisfied that God will and doth blot them out, run to this, the free thoughts of God, and the bowels in God himſelf (without regard to what is in you, or done by you, to move him to do it, or to provoke him not to do it) have put him upon this great work for you.

Look into *Rom.* ix. you ſhall there ſee, that in this buſineſs of love, and blotting out ſin, the Lord will therefore manifeſt himſelf in grace, while *Jacob* is in the womb, before ever he could ſigh and groan to him; he did it then that it might appear *not according to works, but according to the purpoſe of election*, that it might ſtand *not of works, but of grace:* and ſo, when ſouls partake of this grace of the blotting out of iniquity, they may cry out as the Pſalmiſt did in another caſe, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name be the praiſe and glory.* And it is certain, that the apoſtle tells us, *We are juſtified by the grace of God, not of works, leaſt any man ſhould boaſt*; and, therefore, the Lord will have all the ordering of the work of grace, that the creature ſhall have no ſtroke; that when that grace is manifeſted, and he partakes

partakes of it, (the creature having no hand in it) he that glorieth, may glory in him.

SERMON XII.

The Great Giver, and his Free Gifts.

1 CORINTHIANS ii. 12.

Now we have not received the ſpirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God.

AFTER a wonted tender-hearted ſalutation and congratulation to this church of *Corinth*, from chap. i. 1. to verſe 10. the apoſtle *Paul* falls upon a ſeaſonable exhortation to unanimity and concord of ſpirit among them; relating at large the occaſion of this exhortation to them; to wit, the notice he had received of a dangerous ſtrife and contention fallen out among them, in reſpect of their partiality to perſons; this he continues to the 17th or 18th verſes of that chapter; and from thence to the cloſure of the chapter, he declares both the ſcope of his miniſtry in general, and the diverſity of ſucceſs, this miniſtry of his found, both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*.

Now,

Now, in the beginning of this chapter, the apoſtle returns back to this church of *Corinth* in ſpecial; and, whereas the ſtrife was, *one was of* Paul, *and another was of* Apollos, *and another of* Cephas; he acquits himſelf from any thing that might, in reſpect of himſelf, tend to, or occaſion ſuch ſtrife and quarrel; therefore, in verſe i. he wholly diſclaims all of man, which might tend to exalt man among them; *He came not in the excellency of ſpeech, or in words of man's wiſdom to them*; his miniſtry was exerciſed in a low plain-dealing way, without either human rhetorick or wiſdom of man. This he amplifies in verſe 4. for his part, he uſed no manner of inticing words to inveigle or beguile them.

Secondly, He goes on to declare to them the main ſubject of his miniſtry, which he drove at, which he commends both to miniſters and people, as the great thing they were to mind concerning divinity; a rule and pattern well worth imitation of all, verſe 2. *I deſire* (ſaith he) *to know nothing among you, but Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified*; he did not care, that the people ſhould know any thing elſe in the world, ſo that he might impart Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified, unto them.

Thirdly, He declares to them the reaſon, why he came with ſuch plainneſs and ſimplicity, without dreſs, in the exerciſe of his miniſtry, in verſe 5. namely, *That their faith might not ſtand in the wiſdom of men, but in the power of God*; as if he ſhould ſay, They that are wrought upon by human rhetorick, and fineneſs of language, and are

taken with reſpect of any fluency of words, theſe men's faith is built upon human wiſdom: they that are taken with the ſimplicity of the goſpel, as it is in Jeſus, ſimply preached, their faith is built upon the rock itſelf.

Now, leaſt the apoſtle's miniſtry of the goſpel might grow into contempt, becauſe he waved that which was human in it; therefore, in the latter end of verſe 4. he vindicates the power and life of his miniſtry, even while it was ſo plain, and without man's wiſdom: though *Paul* came not in excellency of ſpeech and man's wiſdom; yet he came in *the demonſtration of the Spirit, and with power.* So, though he condeſcends to the weakneſs of this church, being but babes in Chriſt, as he ſpeaks of them; yet he would have them know, though he did, by exerciſing his miniſtry in ſo low and plain a ſtyle for their ſakes; nevertheleſs, when he deals with thoſe that are perfect, that is, higher grown, he can riſe in a higher flight, and deal in more grown and deeper myſteries, than he did with them: and, in verſes 7, 8. he illuſtrates what depths there were in thoſe myſteries that he preached to thoſe that were capable of ſeeing them; and that is quoted out of *Iſaiah* lxiv. 4. *Eye hath not ſeen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, to conceive the things that God hath prepared for them that love him.*

Now, whereas ſome might be ready to object, as the falſe prophets did to *Michajah*, *Which way went the Spirit of God from us to thee?* If wiſdom, and prudence, could not dive into thoſe myſteries

Paul

Paul ſpake of; how could he come by them? he was of no more learning than they; they were as much inſighted in the law as he; if they could not, how could he?

He anſwers in the words following, *Though eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive them; yet, God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit.* Let me tell you, there are ſecrets of God, that all the learning in the world ſhall never attain unto; only the teaching of the Spirit of God acquaints people with them; therefore, it is a branch of the new covenant of God to thoſe in it, *They ſhall be all taught of God*; and they ſhall no more need to ſay to their neighbour, *Know the Lord, for they ſhall all know the Lord*; that is, by his own teaching, *they ſhall be all taught of God.* It is true, in the miniſtry of the goſpel, this knowledge comes uſually to the people; but it is not the wiſdom of man, that either doth or can impart the ſecrets of God to this people; and theſe are the myſteries, the apoſtle ſaith, he preacheth unto thoſe that are more grown and perfect; there is ſtrong meat for thoſe that are old, as well as milk for babes.

Now the apoſtle proceeds on, namely, to ſhew how it comes to paſs that the Spirit of God, and only the Spirit of God, ſhould impart and communicate theſe myſteries, when the wiſdom of the world cannot poſſibly bolt them out; ſaith he, *God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit; for the Spirit ſearcheth all things, even the deep things of God.* But ſome may ſay, the knowledge of theſe myſte-

ries may come ſome other way: to take off that, in the following words, verſe 11. he ſhews expreſsly that the myſtery of the goſpel can come no other way, but by the Spirit of God only, as he will uſe inſtruments to himſelf: I ſay, the original of diſcovering the myſteries of the goſpel is not demonſtration by way of argument or diſcourſe; but the demonſtration is by the Spirit of God. And the apoſtle illuſtrates it by way of compariſon, that the Spirit only is the original of the diſcovery of the myſteries of God: *As no man knows the things of a man, ſave the ſpirit that is in man,* ſo no man knows *the things of God, ſave the Spirit of God:* his meaning in this place is this; you have a thought in your hearts, and if you give no hint of it, by external expreſſions, no man can conceive what you are thinking, till you ſhall ſome way evidence yourſelves: now, as it is impoſſible for any man to dive into ſuch a thought, ſo it is as impoſſible for all the creatures in the world to dive into the myſteries of God; but the Spirit that is of God only reveals them.

Now, in the words of my text, the apoſtle begins to draw to a concluſion of this diſcourſe, and to ſum it up to a head; for having given this deſcription in general, concerning the Spirit's revealing things that could not otherwiſe be ſeen or known, he concludes that it was his, and the caſe of others; *Now we have not received,* &c.

Beloved, let me tell you by the way, it is a matter of great conſequence and eſtabliſhment to know the ſcope and intention of the Holy Ghoſt

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in the ſeveral portions of ſcripture, eſpecially building places that contain life, peace, and joy; and, therefore, I have the more inſiſted upon the opening of the text; for if you take a portion of ſcripture, and cut it off from the dependance, you may miſs the intention of the Spirit therein; for the words may ſound to another ſenſe, than the drift is, except the co-herence be ſeen and obſerved; this, I ſay, that in reading and preaching, there muſt be great regard had to what the Holy Ghoſt principally aims at in ſcripture. Thus much by the bye.

In the text there are three things conſiderable; *Firſt*, What the apoſtle aims at here, or the ſubject matter he is upon, namely, the manifeſtation of the things freely given of God; or to impart to us this, that there are things freely given of God to men.

Secondly, He ſpeaks of them as they may be known; *That we may know*, &c.

Thirdly, He ſhews how the knowledge of theſe things that are freely given of God is attained; and that he ſets out, *firſt*, negatively, *Not by the ſpirit of the world*; *ſecondly*, affirmatively, *by the Spirit that is of God.*

The propoſition is this, *That the things freely given us of God, come to be known, not by the ſpirit of the world, but by the Spirit which is of God being received.*

I am confident, none here will ſtumble at the propoſition, being ſo naturally raiſed from the words of the text; I will not therefore ſpend time

about that. There are theſe particulars in it worth conſideration: and that you may ſuck and be ſatisfied at the breaſts of conſolation, conſider, *Firſt*, what theſe things are, the apoſtle ſpeaks of, that are freely given of God.

Secondly, What it is for theſe things to be given.

Thirdly, What it is for them to be given freely.

Fourthly, What it is to know theſe things that are thus freely given.

Fifthly, How they are made known to us by the Spirit which is of God.

Firſt, What theſe things are that are freely given us of God, for the illuſtration of which know firſt, that it is moſt certainly true indeed, all things whatſoever are the free gift of God to men: *He cauſeth the ſun to ſhine upon the juſt, and upon the unjuſt*; and it is the gift of God that he doth it: I will only touch one thing by the way, and be brief in it; know this, if *Adam*, and his poſterity, had ſtood in their innocency, had continued in the royal law, and never offended, that very life that was annexed unto obedience, I ſay, that very life had been a free gift; and, therefore, if you ſpeak of merit properly, as requiring a reward proportionable, and having equipollency to the work, there could not be merit in a ſtate of innocency; but that very life had it come from the performance of perfect obedience, had been a gift of God. I will give you one illuſtration, that will ſatisfy you fully in it; look upon all the creatures, as for inſtance, upon the ſun, that rejoyceth as a giant to run his race; it had its law,

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as we had, ſet before it, a kind of duty the very creature performs to the creator; if God ſhould be bound to reward according to proportion, and ſo by way of merit, mans obedience with life, why not the obedience of the ſun in the firmament as well as man; the ſun is a creature, as man is; as a creature, man hath the ſame dependance upon the creator as the ſun hath; what hinders but that the ſun in the firmament ſhould merit as well as man; ſeeing it performs as compleat obedience in it's way as man could do? Beloved, carry this for a principle everlaſtingly along with you, all that ever the creature partakes of, it hath from God; and ſo God oweth nothing to it, for that he partakes of, ſave that he oweth by free grant: had not God freely without motive put himſelf upon this, that man ſhould have life upon his obedience, he could challenge life no more than any other creature could.

But I will not follow this, theſe things in general not being the things the apoſtle principally aims at here; for though it be true all things in general are the free gifts of God, yet here he ſpeaks of things in a reſtrained way, of ſome ſpecial things peculiar to the beloved of the Lord; ſuch as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of, in *Pſal.* xxv. 14. *The ſecrets of the Lord are with them that fear him*; or ſuch things as Chriſt ſpeaks of, in *Mat.* xi. 25, 26. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes: even ſo, O Father, becauſe it pleaſed*

thee. The things freely given of God, are the things the wiſe of the world cannot reach; they are hid from them: they are revealed and communicated unto babes. What are thoſe things, you will ſay? I can give you but a touch; for if I dive into the depth of the things, there will be no end, I ſhould never come to the bottom.

Firſt of all, God gives himſelf, and this is ſuch a gift as is a myſtery, the world doth not reach, they know not what it is; it is the greateſt gift that ever God could give the world to give over himſelf; it contains in it the moſt ineſtimable, and invaluable treaſure that is in heaven or earth: for God to paſs over himſelf in ſuch a way of propriety, as that he hath no more command over himſelf, than the creature can have power over him, for that which is good for him; this, I ſay, is the ſtrangeſt thing that ever was; and yet God gives himſelf to men, that is, he gives man as true a propriety in himſelf, as he himſelf hath in himſelf. You know, the Lord ſpeaking of giving himſelf expreſſes it thus, *I have married thee to myſelf in truth and righteouſneſs*; mark what the drift of it is, a huſband marrying a wife, by God's own appointment, gives himſelf up to the wife; ſee how the apoſtle expreſſeth it, *The huſband hath not power over his own body, but the wife; as the wife hath not power over her own body, but the huſband*; as much as to ſay, God being married to a perſon, he hath not that power over himſelf, as to deny himſelf, or the uſe of himſelf, to thoſe to whom he

he hath given himſelf; the believer hath power with God, ſo far as God can be uſeful unto the perſon to whom he gives himſelf. There is as much propriety in a believer to God, as there is in a wife to her huſband; this giving of himſelf by a deed of gift is frequently mentioned unto you in ſcripture, but eſpecially in the covenant of grace; where ever this covenant is repeated, this is the burthen of the ſong, as I may ſay; this is the great buſineſs, *I will be their God*, ſaith he, *and they ſhall be my people*; here is the paſſing of himſelf over to them; and this is, I ſay, one of the hidden things and myſteries that are freely given, God paſſeth over himſelf freely to us.

Secondly, God gives his Son Chriſt, as well as he gives himſelf; that is a ſecond deed of gift, giving of his Son to men: this is frequently repeated; *To us a child is born*, ſaith the prophet, *Iſa.* ix. 6. *To us a Son is given*, ſo *Iſa.* xlii. 6. the ſame prophet tells us what the Lord ſpeaks of Chriſt; *I will give thee for a covenant to the people, a light to the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes.* Here is a giving of Chriſt you ſee; we are the gift of the Father to Chriſt, ſo he is the gift of the Father to us.

Now in the giving of Chriſt there is to be conſidered, *firſt*, The gift of his perſon; *ſecondly*, The gift of all the fruits that redound from the participating of his perſon. *Firſt*, God gives the perſon of Chriſt to men; as much as to ſay, God gives him to ſtand in the room of men, and men ſtand in his room. So that in the giving of Chriſt,

Chriſt, God is pleaſed as it were to make a change[q], Chriſt repreſents our perſons to the Father; we repreſent the perſon of Chriſt to him; all the lovelineſs the perſon of Chriſt hath, that is put upon us; and we are lovely with the Father, even as the Son himſelf. On the other part, all that hatefulneſs, and loathſomeneſs in our nature is put upon Chriſt; he ſtands, as it were, the abhorred of the Father for the time[r], even the forſaken of the

[q] This change of perſons is condemned as error, by D. W. in his *Goſpel-truth*, &c. p. 37, 38. but is a moſt glorious truth of the goſpel; and without which, it would be no goſpel, no glad tidings. It is fully expreſſed in 2 *Cor.* v. 21. as well as in other places, and is the ground of our redemption by Chriſt, of his ſatisfaction for us, and the atonement of our ſins, and the juſtification of our perſons, and indeed of our whole ſalvation; ſo that we have reaſon to break out in the ſame exclamation as *Juſtin Martyr* did upon it, in his epiſtle to *Diognetus*, p. 500. ὦ τῆς γλυκείας ἀνταλλαγῆς *O ſweet change!* A work unſearchable! Benefits unexpected! that the tranſgreſſion of many ſhould be hid by one righteous perſon; and the righteouſneſs of one juſtify many tranſgreſſors.

[r] That is, while he bore the ſins of his people, ſuſtained the wrath of God, and was made a curſe for them; nor ſhould this ſeem harſh to any, eſpecially as the Dr. has qualified it; for he does not ſay he ſtands the abhorred, but, *as it were* the abhorred of the Father; though, had he ſaid he was abhorred for a time, it is no more than the ſcripture ſays; *Pſal.* lxxxix. 38. *Thou haſt caſt off and abhorred, thou haſt been wroth with thine anointed,* or with thy Meſſiah; which words are underſtood of Chriſt, by ſeveral interpreters ancient and modern; Chriſt indeed, as the Son of God, was always the object of his Father's love; and ſo he was in his ſtate of humiliation, and even under his ſufferings and death; *John* x. 17. as the celebrated *Witſius* obſerves, "Chriſt was "repreſented not only under the emblem of a Lamb, "a fooliſh beaſt, and prone to go aſtray; but of a "goat, laſcivious, wanton, and of an ill ſmell; yea, of a "curſed ſerpent, and on that account execrable and curſed of "God; not for the taking of our ſins upon him which was "an holy action, and moſt grateful to God; but for the ſins "which he took upon him, and for the perſons of the ſinners "which he ſuſtained." *Animadv. Irenic.* c. 3. ſ. 5. p. 43.

the Father, as he repreſented our perſons, bare our blame, ſuſtained our wrath, and drank the dregs of our cup. Here is the gift of the perſon; that which is Chriſt's, is ours; that which is ours, is his. There is an admirable expreſſion, in 2 *Cor.* v. 21. *He was was made ſin for us, that knew no ſin; that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* It is plainly manifeſted, that which we were, Chriſt became, *ſin for us*; then that which Chriſt was, we became, that is, *the righteouſneſs of God*; *for we are made the righteouſneſs of God in him.*

Secondly, With Chriſt there is the gift of the fruit of him; ſhe that hath an huſband, hath all that is his. I have read an ancient deed of gift, made by one of the firſt kings of *England*, giving all from the heavens to the center of the earth; ſo that if there be minerals in the bowels of the earth, they are comprehended in the gift: ſo it is with Chriſt; God, in his Son, and with him, giveth all that he hath, and is. All the mines in the bowels of Chriſt, are ours; *All things are yours, for ye are Chriſt's, and Chriſt is God's:* ſo that whatever is Chriſt's, by the gift of him, becomes the perſons to whom he is given. Conſider what you can imagine Chriſt hath as a fruit growing from him as he is Chriſt, with him that fruit is given to man, namely, to his own people; as free juſtification from all ſin; free reconciliation with the Father; free adoption to all the glory and liberty of the ſons of God; firm peace and agreement without any more quarrelling between God

God and his people; a free uſe of all things in a ſanctified way.

Finally, (we cannot run upon theſe particulars at large) The *third* thing given of God, is the Spirit of God; *He will give his Spirit to them that aſk him*, Luke xi. 13. There is a deed of gift of the Spirit; *I will ſend you another comforter*, ſaith Chriſt, *and he ſhall lead you into all truth.*

And, as the Spirit of God, is the gift of God, ſo the knowledge of thoſe free gifts that are only known by the Spirit itſelf, is the gift of God. With this Spirit, wiſdom and underſtanding are given, and the knowledge of the myſtery of the goſpel; that you ſhall not only have theſe things (ſpoken of before) given you, but the knowledge of them all; the ſound knowledge of them is as much the gift of God as the things themſelves; this is by the Spirit of God. Comfort is given by him; you ſhall never have reſt in your ſpirits, but as he rocks you aſleep, and gives you reſt. In brief, as all things are given in Chriſt by his own purchaſe [s], ſo all things are given in him by the Spirit,

[s] Our *Engliſh* divines, (for I don't remember to have met with it among others) eſpecially of the laſt age, and many in this, have uſed the word *purchaſe*, concerning the bleſſings of grace and glory, and other things. They, indeed, come to us thro' the blood of the covenant, that ſo we may enjoy them conſiſtent with the holineſs and righteouſneſs of God; but ſtrictly and properly ſpeaking, nothing was purchaſed by Chriſt, but his church; nor is any other in ſcripture ever ſaid to be ſo; the only paſſage that looks like it, *Eph.* i. 14 reſpects the people of God, the portion and poſſeſſion of Chriſt, purchaſed and redeemed by him; the reaſon of which is, the people of God, tho' given to Chriſt, were captives and in other hands, and therefore muſt be redeemed or bought out; whereas the bleſſings of grace and glory never were. It would be better, I think, if the word was diſ-uſed.

Spirit, by way of application and poſſeſſion in particular.

Let us, therefore, now conſider (for I muſt now redeem the time) what it is for theſe (I might have mentioned other particulars that are given) to be given of God.

A deed of gift, is oppoſed to two things. *Firſt*, To ſale; *ſecondly*, To loan. Theſe things therefore are communicated by God. *Firſt*, Not by ſale or bargain; he doth not play the merchant; here are my wares, give me the price, and take the commodity. I beſeech you take heed of ſuch principles as theſe are; the covenant of Chriſt, as ſome may imagine, runs upon this ſtrain, *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people*; that is, I will tell you upon what terms I will be yours; come bring this price, deliver up yourſelves to me, and then I will be yours; give me the price and take it; God is no ſuch huckſter; he drives no ſuch bargains in giving himſelf, and in giving Chriſt, and his Spirit; he makes no ſale at all, for ſale, and deed of gift, are oppoſite. If I buy ſuch a thing of a man, he doth not give it me. Beloved, you muſt not think to bring a price to God for thoſe things you would have of him; take heed of ſuch conceits, that your aſſurance, peace, and comfort muſt coſt you dear before you have them; for God will take no coſt nor price at your hands. Obſerve that admirable expreſſion in *Iſaiah* lv. 1, 2, 3. by this you ſhall plainly perceive God is no huckſter, he doth not keep ſhop, he doth not ſhew you wares, and aſk a price of you before you have

have them: *Ho, every one that thirſteth,* (that is, that have a mind) *come to the waters, come buy and eat; buy wine and milk without money, and without price.* Why money, and price? there is a difference between money and price; namely, as there is a difference between money, and monies-worth: your poor men, their day's-labour is monies-worth, and their day's-labour is a price; therefore, there is equality between the labour and the wages, as there is equivalence between the money, and the thing bought. Now the meaning of the Holy Ghoſt here is, God doth not look for money, nor price, nor labour; he doth not look that men ſhould earn their gifts before they have them; he looks not for the penny, nor for the penny's-worth; therefore, be not deceived, though in reſpect of Chriſt, God made a ſale, and made him pay according to the bargain; in which regard, the apoſtle ſaith, *We are bought with a price*; yet, in reſpect of us, I ſay, there is no ſale at all. Let me tell you, there are more *Simonical* perſons in the world than men are aware of. In *Acts* viii. the great ſin of *Simon Magus* was, *That he thought the gift of the Holy Ghoſt might be bought with money*; the apoſtle in that chapter thunders out an execration upon him, for offering to think or ſpeak this, *That the gift of the Holy Ghoſt might be bought with money*; and therefore he tells him plainly, *That he was in the gall of bitterneſs, and in the bond of iniquity, and that he had no part nor portion in the matter.* How near they follow to the heels and ſteps of *Simon Magus*, that will bring their

their price in their hands to God, to partake of the gift of the Holy Ghoſt, I leave it to the wiſe to judge. Therefore, you that would have your part and portion in this matter, of the gift of God, know that it muſt coſt you nothing; this derogateth not from your obedience; there is employment enough for you, and there are ends ſufficient for it, though this obedience be not the price you are to bring, from whence you are to expect the gifts of God: God requires your obedience to glorify him; to be the manifeſtation of your thankfulneſs; for the good of your brethren; for the manifeſting and accompliſhing his gifts in the uſe of ordinances; but that theſe ſhould be a price, is a groſs miſtake. Do not dream that your conſcionable walking before God here, is the thing that muſt commend you to him hereafter; nothing but Jeſus Chriſt, ſent out of the love and bowels of the Father, can poſſibly commend you to God. Do not think this, or that, you do, is that price from whence you are to expect the things of God; but, know, that theſe are given of him. I ſhall run over ſome heads very briefly, for I ſee I am much prevented.

Secondly, Therefore, beſides ſale, God's gifts are not a loan neither; this is a great conſideration. The things that we have of God, as they are a gift, ſo they are not a loan; what we receive of him, are not lent. There is this difference between lending, and giving; he that lends money, looks it ſhould be paid again; he that gives it, gives it for ever, without ever looking for it again.

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The things of God, as they are given, ſo he doth not look for them again. You know, it is a ridiculous thing to give a thing, and take it again; we count this childrens play. How many of God's children, in temptation, look upon the things that God hath given them, and yet ſuſpect he will take them again? What is lent, men may challenge again; but, when a man gives a thing, it is injuſtice for him to challenge it any more; there is the difference between lending and giving. If God gives things to men, and takes them again, he relinquiſheth and fruſtrateth his own act; for if he takes them away, they were not given. A deed of gift, and title of land by deed of gift, are as firm as a title by purchaſe; what God hath given, he cannot call it in again. I ſpeak this to the conſolation of trembling ſpirits; they look upon God beſtowing himſelf, Chriſt, and his Spirit, and they receive what God hath given; yet their ſpirits tremble, and they are afraid he will take theſe away again from them: they commit ſuch and ſuch ſins; therefore, ſurely, ſay they, I ſhall loſe that I have; remember the nature of a gift, and remember this too, that whatever God hath given, he calls it not in again. Suppoſe a father ſhould deliver up and give all his lands and goods to his ſon, and make a real deed of gift in law, paſſing it over to him, as firm as law can make it; this ſon, peradventure, commits ſome fault afterwards; can the father call in this deed of gift, in reſpect of the fault committed? Thou art a ſon of God, and a darling of his; it may be thou

thou haſt committed many ſins; for *in many things we ſin all*; doth God call in his deed? Is not this deed of gift enrolled in the word of grace, and upon record? This very enrolling is ſufficient ſecurity to thee; thou can'ſt not be diſ-poſſeſſed of it.

There are many think that ſuch preaching gives way to licentiouſneſs; I anſwered it fully the laſt time I was among you; *I beſeech you by the mercies of God, preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice unto God.* The conſideration of the unchangeableneſs of the grace of God and his love; there is no other means in the world to keep men from ſin, but this ſtands firm for ever. As things are the gift of God, ſo they are unchangeable to them, to whom they are given; and the Lord give you wiſdom, and underſtanding, and his Spirit, to hold faſt a truth of ſuch infinite concern to the joy and peace of your ſpirits; and till you receive ſuch unchangeable principles, whereupon the ſtability of your peace is founded, you will be like waves of the ſea toſſed to and fro with every wind of temptation; you will have every little thing raiſe ſuſpicions and jealouſies in your ſpirits. But, beloved, *God is not a man, that he ſhould lie, nor the ſon of man, that he ſhould repent: ſhall he ſay, and ſhall it not come to paſs?* Numb. xxiii. 19. Shall God aſſent to a thing, and how much more ſhall not he make good that word that he aſſents to? Certainly, when men give a thing, they will not take it away, ſeeing the thing is given; I ſay, the things of God are given, and he cannot take them away; *The gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt you.*

There are many things of uſeful conſideration, if time would give me leave to open them to you.

Thirdly, The things of God are not only given, but they are freely given.

I muſt but touch upon the heads; there are theſe five things conſiderable in a free gift; I will but name them.

Firſt, A free gift is, when a thing is given without compulſion; a man doth not properly give his purſe upon the highway, when thieves force him to it; things freely given are not compulſory, but voluntary.

Secondly, Things may be given, but grudgingly; they may be given with a heart reluctıng againſt it; as many men give to the poor, to ſerve the neceſſity of the times; but it goes to their hearts to part with it; here is a gift, but it is not a free gift, becauſe the heart is not enlarged, here is not a ready heart; but God doth not give grudgingly, he loves a cheerful giver, and doth ſo himſelf; for *He waits that he may be gracious*, Iſa. xxx. 18.

Thirdly, A gift is free, and free indeed, when a thing is given only out of the motion in, and from a man's own ſpirit, without any external incentive and provocation to put him upon ſuch a gift. It is commendable, I confeſs, for a man to be perſwaded by others to do good; but the glory of free gifts ſtands in the freeneſs of a man's own ſpirit without provocation. Know thus much in general, all the things we receive from God, there is no incentive, no provocation, no motive, as the original, to ſtir or provoke him to give them.

them. Let me tell you this, Chriſt himſelf is not the original motive of the gift of God; he is the inſtrument, or, as the ſcripture ſaith, the mediator of our partaking of the gifts of God; the love of God in himſelf is the firſt fountain of all the gifts of God to us; nay, the very fountain of Chriſt himſelf, to compaſs the fruition and enjoyment of theſe gifts, that the love of God himſelf had firſt framed, compoſed, and ordained for us; much leſs then, can any creature in the world have prevalency with God to ſtir up bowels in him, as if he needed to be ſtirred up to do the good he doth; that which he doth, cometh from the motion of his own thoughts riſing in himſelf, not being raiſed up by any thing without himſelf.

Fourthly, A gift is free, when it is bountiful; ſuch a man is a free houſe-keeper; that is, he keeps a bountiful houſe: ſo the gifts of God are free in reſpect of his bounty; God doth not ſow ſparingly, but liberally; he giveth us freely to enjoy all things; *There is plenteous redemption with him*, Pſal. cxxx. 7. There is abundance of ſatiety; *They ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with the fatneſs of thy houſe, they ſhall drink of the river of thy pleaſure*, Pſal. xxxvi. 8. Here is a free God; here is freeneſs indeed, in that he is a bountiful God, in all that he beſtows upon the ſons of men; he fills the cup to the brim, preſſed down, heaped up, and runing over; in this manner is the bounty of God expreſſed; *He ſaves to the uttermoſt all them that come to God by him*, Heb. vii. 25.

Fifthly and *laſtly*, A free gift is a gift that is

unconditional; God doth not propoſe conditions before-hand, but gives his gifts without reſpect to any condition. Beloved, do not miſtake; our faith, and obedience, are not the condition of God's gifts. That in the ſong of *Zachariah* is obſervable, *That he would grant us, that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might ſerve him without fear, in holineſs and righteouſneſs before him, all the days of our lives*; obſerve, this ſervice *without fear in holineſs and righteouſneſs all the days of our lives*, is not the condition of deliverance, that we might partake of it; but here is firſt deliverance, and then ſervice is the fruit of it; not deliverance the fruit of ſervice; God delivers, and then we ſerve; and the tenour of the goſpel in this, is contrary to the tenour of the law; the tenour of the law runs thus, "Firſt do, then live;" the goſpel ſaith, "Firſt live, then do;" *When thou waſt in thy blood, I ſaid unto thee, Live; then waſhed I thee with water, then put on ornaments upon thee.* Thus, when you conſider, the frame of the goſpel runs, that there is nothing comes to men, but as a free gift of God, even Chriſt himſelf is ſo given; do not think that God gives Chriſt upon condition.

Fourthly, What it is for men to know this gift of God; there is a two-fold knowledge; in general, *Firſt*, A knowledge of the thing; *Secondly*, A knowledge of propriety in the thing; ſo there is a two-fold knowledge of theſe things given; *Firſt*, The knowledge of the things given; *Secondly*, The knowledge of propriety in them: the knowledge of the thing itſelf given is two-fold; *Firſt*, Intellectual;

Intellectual; *Secondly*, Practical. The intellectual knowledge is the natural underſtanding of the thing in a proper ſenſe; practical knowledge is a ſenſible knowledge. You may diſtinguiſh them thus, as the knowledge man has of the ſweetneſs of ſugar in his underſtanding, and the knowledge of the ſweetneſs of it in the taſte. There is a great deal of difference between theſe two; for the things of God that are given, may be known intellectually in a common way, not only by the elect, but reprobate; but the people of God only know them practically, that is, they receive by degrees the ſweetneſs of them, and God gives the taſte of them more and more to them.

Secondly, There is, beſides the knowledge of the thing, the knowledge of propriety, which is this, when men know the things of God, and know them as their own. It is one thing for a perſon to know ſuch a woman is wiſe, beautiful, and rich; and it is another thing to know this wiſe, beautiful, and rich woman is my wife; that I have a propriety in all ſhe is, and hath: and ſo, likewiſe, it is one thing for a woman to know that a man is a man of parts, of wealth, and honour; to know him that he is ſo, is one thing, and to know him that is thus wiſe, rich, and honourable, to be her huſband, is another thing: ſo it is likewiſe in the knowledge of ſpiritual things; it is one thing to know God and ſpiritual things, another thing to know him by way of propriety, to know that he gives himſelf to me as mine; and ſo, likewiſe, of all the reſt of the particulars that are given; as

Chriſt and the Spirit; now all this comes not by the ſpirit of the world, but by the Spirit that is of God. This I ſhould have ſhewed more at large; but of this hereafter; becauſe I fear I have already treſpaſſed upon your patience.

SERMON XIII.

Reconciliation by Chriſt alone.

2 CORINTHIANS v. 19.

To wit, That God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them.

THIS great apoſtle of the Gentiles, Saint *Paul* I mean, though he did not firſt break the ice, nor lay the firſt hand upon the wall of partition between *Jews* and *Gentiles*, to pull it down, that they might become both one in one Chriſt; (for *Peter* went before him, and was indeed the firſt in this buſineſs, though with great bitterneſs of ſpirit even from the reſt of the apoſtles themſelves; who ſuppoſed that the glorious priviledges of Chriſt, were to be confined only to the nation of the *Jews*, as you may perceive in *Acts* chap. viii. and ix; though *Paul* I ſay, was not the firſt) yet,

yet, as he himſelf ſpeaks in this buſineſs of publiſhing the grace of God in Chriſt to the Gentiles, he laboured more abundantly than they all; of which labour of his, this chapter gives abundant teſtimony, eſpecially in the beginning of verſe 14; where he gives the great occaſion, or motive, why he did preach Chriſt ſo clearly and freely to the Gentiles; *The love of Chriſt*, ſaith he, *conſtrains me:* as if he ſhould ſay, ſeeing that the glory of the grace of God, hath ſo far extended itſelf, as that not only the *Jews*, but alſo the *Gentiles*, may have a portion in him, it is pity that ſo much abundant grace which ſerves to the magnifying of Chriſt ſo exceedingly ſhould be concealed; Chriſt hath done ſo much for me, thinks *Paul*, that it were an unworthy part in me to conceal that which ſhould make ſo much unto his glory; the love wherewith he hath loved me, conſtrains me to do the utmoſt (that he might have all his praiſe) to manifeſt his glory.

Therefore, having thus laid down the great motive that ſet him on work to publiſh the goſpel, he takes up this reſolution to do it, let it coſt him what it will; (as it is like to do all that will be ſo exact in publiſhing the goſpel as he was) yet the love of Chriſt did ſo conſtrain him, that he cannot keep it in; he muſt ſpeak out this love of his. Thus he comes to the buſineſs in the latter end of verſe 14. *If one die for* all, *then were* all *dead*; his meaning is this, he puts the emphaſis upon the word *all*; and that emphaſis is not ſpoken ſimply, but relatively and comparatively; as much

as to ſay, It is not only the *Jews* have part in the death of Chriſt, but *all* have a part in it; If Chriſt had an eye not only on the *Jews*, but on the *Gentiles* too, in his death; *Then*, ſaith he, *all were dead*, that is, *all* have a part in that death.

Now, that the apoſtle here mainly intends the ſetting forth of the largeneſs of God's grace in Chriſt, extending not only to the *Jews*, but alſo to the *Gentiles*, verſe 16. makes clear; for, ſaith he there, *Henceforth know we no man after the fleſh; yea, though we have known Chriſt after the fleſh; yet henceforth know we him ſo no more.* Give me leave to open the meaning of it; for I muſt tell you there is a great deal of miſtake concerning the ſcope of the apoſtle in theſe words, which makes the ſenſe of them ſo obſcure in the reading of them. The apoſtle was once of the ſame mind with *James*, and the reſt; that Chriſt, as he came of the fleſh of *Abraham*, and ſo, according to the fleſh, was of the kindred of all the *Jews*; they verily thought that the virtue of Chriſt, and redemption by him, had extended no further than to the fleſh, that is, to the ſame fleſh of which he came; they of the circumciſion chide *Peter*, that he ſhould offer to go without the bounds of the *Jews*, to preach the goſpel to them, which they thought had no part in it; the apoſtle was of this mind once; but *Henceforth*, ſaith he, *know I no man after the fleſh*; that is, I will never preach Chriſt after the fleſh, as if none had ſhare in him but thoſe that are of the kindred of which he came; nay, ſaith he, *Though I have known*

known Chriſt thus after the fleſh, henceforth know I him ſo no more; where he expounds what he ſpake before; as if he ſhould ſay, I thought Chriſt had had a mind to ſave none but the kindred of which he came; I will know him thus no longer; I will preach the goſpel ſo no more; I will preach it no more to the *Jews*, than to the *Gentiles*; they that are not of the fleſh of Chriſt, have as great a portion in him, as thoſe that are of his fleſh.

Hence he begins to gather up his main doctrine which he would preach to the Gentiles, and that he brings in verſe 17. *If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature*; where the emphaſis lies upon the words *any man*; If *any man* be in Chriſt, he is a new creature; as if he ſhould ſay, this is the doctrine I will now preach to the world; not if the *Jew* be in Chriſt; but if *any man* in the world be in him, he is a new creature; every man in the world hath this priviledge, as well as the *Jews*; if any man be in Chriſt, he ſhall be a new creature, as well as the *Jews:* and becauſe of ſome obſcurity in this phraſe, therefore in verſe 18. the apoſtle expounds his own meaning, what he intends by a new creature: give me leave to open this place to you; for I muſt tell you there are ſome great miſtakes in this point. Moſt men think that this phraiſe, *new creature*, is a renewed, ſanctified man, ſo as he becomes new in his own converſation, when his life is changed; I do not deny the truth of the thing, all that are in Chriſt, he renews them, ſanctifies them, and ſubdues iniquity in them; but, under favour, let me tell you, the

the apoſtle's meaning here by *new creature* is, not that they are ſanctified; but they are *new creatures*, that is, they are reconciled unto God; this is his meaning: *If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature*; that is, he is brought into a new condition that he was not in before; and this new condition is, he is now reconciled unto God; whereas, before he was an alien and ſtranger to him.

But, you will ſay, How will it appear that the apoſtle's *new creature* is a perſon reconciled, and conſidered as reconciled, and not as ſanctified?

I anſwer, This is clear by verſe 18. *For, all things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.* Mark well; the main thing he drives at here is, to let the *Corinthians* know, and us with them, what the main miniſtry was which Chriſt had committed unto them; which was this, to publiſh, that *If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature.* What is that? namely, that *God, from whom all things are, hath reconciled us unto himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt*; this was the miniſtry which was committed unto them.

Now, if the apoſtle had ſpoken here of ſanctification, he would have ſaid, that the miniſtry committed unto him, with the reſt, was a miniſtry of ſanctification, as well as reconciliation; but the miniſtry God committed to him here was this, God reconciling men to himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt; ſo that the being a new creature here, which was the miniſtry committed to the apoſtle,

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is reconciliation with God by Jeſus Chriſt. Now in verſe 19. the text that I have read unto you, he begins a-new to explain more particularly, what this miniſtry is that the Lord hath committed unto him; *To wit*, ſaith he, *that God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.* And, therefore, in the next verſe, you ſhall find he makes this ſo eſſential a buſineſs to the miniſtry of the goſpel, that he calls himſelf and the reſt, embaſſadors, and embaſſadors for this very purpoſe, namely, in Chriſt's ſtead, to beſeech people that they would be reconciled unto God; and then in the cloſure of the chapter, he tells them what the fruits of this reconciliation are, and by what means we come to partake of it: *He was made ſin for us, that knew no ſin; that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* From which words I might obſerve to you, as they have reference to the co-herence,

Firſt, What the great and main buſineſs of us that profeſs ourſelves to be the miniſters of Chriſt, ought to be in the world with men. It is to be lamented, I confeſs, and I would to God there were no occaſion to ſpeak of it, whilſt we profeſs ourſelves to be the embaſſadors of Chriſt, to diſpatch this great buſineſs, to beſeech men in Chriſt's ſtead to be reconciled unto God; we are too much the miniſters of *Moſes*, preſſing and thundering the wrath of God from heaven; publiſhing unto men the working out their own ſalvation by their own

own works, according to the law; putting on them the performance of duties in every particular, that they may have peace and joy of ſpirit from it; telling them, that they muſt make their peace with God, by faſting, and prayer, and mourning: is this to beſeech men in Chriſt's ſtead to be reconciled unto God by Chriſt alone? This is the embaſſage of the miniſters of the goſpel; and whoever he be that forſakes this meſſage, he goes, and is not ſent; he takes upon him to manage a buſineſs out of his commiſſion; for the commiſſion is, that we in Chriſt's ſtead ſhould beſeech men to be reconciled unto God, and that by the blood of Chriſt alone.

Secondly, I might note a thing, which, peradventure, puzzles the heads of many people, how you may underſtand thoſe many texts of ſcripture that ſpeak ſo largely of the extent of the death of Chriſt, *He died not for our ſins only, but for the ſins of the whole world:* and ſo verſe 14. *If one died for all, then were all dead.* From whence many collect the univerſality of redemption unto all particular perſons in the world [t]; but from this coherence

[t] The learned *Hoornbeeck* aſſerts, that the Dr. from this paſſage, and 1 *Joh.* ii. 2. after quoted, "Collects the univerſality "of the redemption of all particular perſons in the world, tho' "all are not partakers of that reconciliation:" in which this learned man appears to be miſtaken; for the Dr. does not collect this himſelf, only ſays, *Many collect it from hence*; and he himſelf ſeems to be of a different mind by the adverſative BUT *from this co-herence*, &c. and expreſsly ſays, the apoſtle does not ſpeak of every particular perſon, but in oppoſition to the *Jews*; and ſo, on the other text, 1 *Joh.* ii. 2. he obſerves, that the apoſtle does not oppoſe the world unto the elect, *but the world of the elect unto the* Jews; and ſuggeſts, that there are ſome

herence you may plainly perceive, that the apoſtle's main drift is not, that every particular perſon partakes of reconciliation by Chriſt; he doth not ſpeak in reſpect of every particular, but in oppoſition to the *Jews*; as if he ſhould ſay, you miſtake yourſelves, you that are of the *Jews*, that boaſt of Chriſt, as if there were no Chriſt but in yourſelves; no, ſaith he, you are miſtaken, he goes beyond you, he goes over all the world. And when St. *John* ſaith, (1 *Joh.* ii. 2.) *And not for our ſins only, but for the ſins of the whole world*, he doth not ſay *ours*, in reference to believers, but he ſaith *ours*, as he was naturally of the ſtock of *Abraham*; when he ſaith, *Not for our ſins only, but for the ſins of the whole world*, he doth not oppoſe the world unto the elect, but the world of the elect unto the *Jews*; and his meaning is, all the world hath a part in Chriſt, and in every corner of it there is a portion of Chriſt, as well as there is in us, who are of the ſeed of *Abraham*; and, therefore, the apoſtle (*Rom.* iv. 13.) ſaith expreſsly, *That the promiſe is not made to* Abraham, *and to his ſeed after the fleſh*, but to his ſeed after the Spirit, *that walk in the*

ſome in all the world, and in every corner of it, that have a part in Chriſt, and are his portion; which is very far from the doctrine of general redemption; and tho' the Dr. ſometimes uſes ſome general phraſes, when off his guard, yet I cannot think he held the doctrine of univerſal redemption; and this learned profeſſor himſelf, who is the only one I ever met with that charged the Dr. with it, ſeems to have ſome heſitation himſelf about it; for he ſays, (of the Dr. and of thoſe in his time called *Antinomians*) "*Redemptionem docent* "*aliquam univerſalem*, they teach ſome ſort of univerſal re- "demption, or univerſal redemption in ſome ſenſe." *Vid.* Hoornbeeck's *Summ. Controverſ.* l. 10. p. 702, 703.

the ſteps of the faith of Abraham. By this you may be able to reſolve thoſe manifold difficulties that ariſe from the univerſality of the tender of grace by Chriſt unto the world; the world, I ſay, is oppoſed only to the narrow confines of the *Jews*, and includes not particular perſons; but this is not that I mainly drive at for the preſent.

I come to the text itſelf. The ſubſtance of the main miniſtry of the apoſtle ſtands in this, that *God is in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them.* In which you may obſerve with me,

Firſt, The great grace, that living, lively, and heart-reviving grace the apoſtle brings to light, and commends, to the comforting of the hearts of God's people, and that is reconciliation with God.

Secondly, Note here, the original author or efficient of this reconciliation and grace, that is, God himſelf.

Thirdly, Note here, the main means by which this reconciliation is effected, and that is Chriſt himſelf alone; *God was in Chriſt.*

Fourthly, Note this, the time when this reconciliation was made between God and perſons in particular. The apoſtle himſelf, tho' he lived ſo many years before us, ſpeaks of it as a thing already paſt; he doth not ſay God *is*, or *will* be, but he ſpeaks in the preter-perfect tenſe, *God* was *in Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelf*; it is a thing long before finiſhed perfectly to our hands; that we may, when God hath given us eyes to behold

behold it, ſee it as a thing already done, and perfected long before, and not now perfecting, much leſs now to be begun.

Fifthly, We may note the perſons with whom God in Chriſt is reconciled, and that is the world; *God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelf.*

The principal thing I mean to drive at, is the conſideration of the great grace that the apoſtle brings here to light; and that is, reconciliation with God; *God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelf.*

What is it (will you ſay) for God to be reconciled to perſons?

For the clearing of this, *Firſt*, note, ſomething is to be premiſed as a neceſſary antecedent to reconciliation itſelf. Unto reconciliation, of neceſſity there muſt be ſuppoſed ſomething to be done by us, occaſioning a breach between God and us; adminiſtering ſuch juſt cauſe of diſtaſte, and of offence, as not only cauſed God to ſeparate himſelf afar off from men, but alſo to prepare wrath and vengeance. Wherever there is reconciliation, it is ſuppoſed there was a breach made; and, upon the breach made, reconciliation is the bringing perſons, thus at diſtance and difference by a breach, to become one again; and, therefore, you muſt know, there is no man under heaven reconciled unto God, but as he is, or was conſidered as walking contrary unto God; and that this contrary walking unto him hath occaſioned a breach between God and him. And, therefore, you ſhall find, when the apoſtle ſpeaks of our being reconciled

ciled unto God, he brings ſtill in this clauſe, that there were eſtrangement and diſtance, before ſuch union and reconciliation: as, in *Eph.* ii. 13. you ſhall find how he brings in the previous conſideration; *You*, (ſaith he) *who were ſometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Chriſt*; this making nigh, or bringing together, is the reconciliation that is made with God; and the perſons, that are thus made nigh, before their bringing nigh, are ſaid to be afar off; as much as to ſay, there is that contrariety between God and man naturally, that puts him afar off from God, and makes him remote. *He beholds the wicked afar off*, (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *Pſal.* cxxxviii. 6. God keeps at a diſtance with men, when they walk in a way giving diſtaſte and offence unto him; and it is the buſineſs of Chriſt to bring them nigh again, thoſe that were thus ſometimes afar off. But the apoſtle ſpeaks more plainly in *Col.* i. 21, 22. *You*, ſaith he, *that were ſometimes alienated* (or eſtranged, that is to ſay, from God) *and enemies in your minds through wicked works, hath he now reconciled.* Where he not only ſhews there is a remote diſtance, and a kind of eſtrangement between God and men, before reconciliation; but he delivers the true proper ground from whence this alienation proceeds; *who were alienated in your minds, by reaſon of wicked works:* our wicked works are they that cauſe alienation and enſtrangement from God; *And*, ſaith he, *you who were thus ſometimes alienated, are reconciled by Chriſt.* And, therefore, know, this muſt be laid down as a certain poſition,

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and be received of men, that in reſpect of themſelves they are alienated and eſtranged perſons, and the wickedneſs of their ways is that which cauſeth that alienation, and eſtrangement, and ſeparation, from God.

But ſome (it may be) will object; Was there ever a time that God was alienated and eſtranged as an enemy to thoſe people of his, with whom he is now reconciled? Some will ſay, God loves his people with an everlaſting love, and he never looks upon his people but with a look of love, and with a look of union.

For anſwer to this, give me leave to clear a myſtery unto you; this ſeems to be a kind of paradox, that God ſhould, from all eternity, look with eyes of love upon his people, and yet there ſhould be a time in which there ſhould be an alienation or enmity between God and them. For the reconciliation of this difference, you muſt know, it is one thing for God to recollect all future things that ſhould come in all the ſeveral times of the world, into one thought of his own; and it is another thing for theſe things to come to paſs in their ſeveral times according to their own nature. You muſt know, it is true, that in God's eternal thoughts, according to the infinite vaſtneſs of his own comprehenſion, he did ſum up, from firſt to laſt, all the occurrences and paſſages which in ſucceſſion of time ſhould come to paſs. As for example; he had at once in his eye, man in his innocency, in his fall, and in his reſtoration again by Chriſt; he had in his eye, man committing

ſin againſt him from time to time; and, at the ſame inſtant, had in his eye, Chriſt dying for theſe ſins of men, and ſo ſatisfying his own juſtice for their tranſgreſſions. Now, becauſe God had all things at once in his eye, which, in reſpect of their actual being, are in ſucceſſion of time; therefore, it comes to paſs, that God from all eternity had everlaſting love unto his own people, tho' in time they do thoſe actions, which in their own nature, are enmity againſt God. For example; you and I are, it may be, this moment committing ſome ſin, which is enmity to the nature of God; that ſin, ſimply conſidered in its own nature, hath an eſtrangement in it, to ſeparate between us and God; but, tho' it is true, that ſin committed hath, in its own nature, a power of ſeparating; yet, as God from all eternity had the preſent ſins, we now commit, in his eye, and at the ſame moment had the ſatisfaction in his eye; from hence it comes to paſs, there was not a time in which God actually ſtood at enmity with our perſons: but, in reſpect of the nature of things coming ſucceſſively to paſs, man's condition may be conſidered as a condition of enmity; and again, it may be conſidered as a condition of reconciliation to God. That you and I were born in ſin is true, and that this our being born in ſin was a ſtate of enmity againſt God, is as true; that in the fulneſs of time Chriſt came into the world, and then actually did bear our ſins, by which God became reconciled unto us again, is alſo moſt certainly true. There s a great diſtance of time between

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ſin committed, and that ſatisfaction actually made; but, in reſpect of God's eye looking upon all things at once, there is no diſtance of time between that enmity ſin did produce, and that reconciliation that the blood of Chriſt hath wrought, to take away this enmity. I hope, tho' this be a high myſtery, yet it will be clear to ſuch that will but take into conſideration that difference between God's own ſimple act of compriſing all the ſins of the world at once, (I mean that infinite act of God in that infinite comprehenſion of his) and the ſucceſſion of things in their own time and nature; this being ſuppoſed, that perſons actually do that which is enmity, and that which makes a difference and ſeparation.

Reconciliation itſelf briefly ſtands in this, namely, that whatever breach there was, or was occaſioned by any act of man in it, all theſe breaches are quite made up, and taken away: when God is reconciled to perſons, he hath no more quarrel with, nor controverſy againſt them with whom he is reconciled; though this day, yeſterday, to-morrow, and the next day, thou doſt commit a ſin, which, in its own nature, is enmity, and may occaſion a breach between God and thee; yet, I ſay, if God be once reconciled, all whatever adminiſters any quarrel or controverſy between God and thee, is abſolutely taken up; he hath no more to object againſt thee, or to hit thee in the teeth withal. Underſtand, I beſeech you, the nature of reconciliation, and you ſhall find there is more in it than uſually is apprehended;

you know as long as men ſtomach one another, and, as often as they have occaſion, are quarrelling one with another; all this while theſe perſons are not reconciled indeed, though peradventure there may be ſome complimental ſhaking of hands; if ſtill there be ſnarling one at another, and ſtomaching one another, they are not reconciled: ſo I ſay, is God quarrelling with thy ſpirit? is he ſtill hitting thee in the teeth with ſuch and ſuch ſins, thou committeſt againſt him? is the bitterneſs of God poured upon thee? is his wrath revealed againſt thee? I ſay, if there be this wrath of God at any time truly revealed againſt thee, there is not yet a reconciliation of God towards there. In reconciliation there are no old grudgings, quarrellings, and controverſies; there is no hearing of them any more; in that there are forgiving and forgetting, as you uſe to ſay; and all this, whatever it is with men, its thus with God; where ever God is reconciled, he forgives and forgets for ever.

Therefore you ſhall find when the Lord ſpeaks of reconciliation in the covenant, he ſaith, *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people*; here is the drawing and making a perſon one with himſelf; *And your ſins and your iniquities will I remember no more*, follows it. I beſeech you, obſerve it well, there is a great deal of matter in this expreſſion, and this will give you reſt if ever you have it. Either you muſt deny God is reconciled, or you muſt conclude he hath forgiven your tranſgreſſions, and he will remember your ſins no more.

It may be you feel much corruption venting itſelf; though you act this and that tranſgreſſion at this time, if God be reconciled to you, he doth not remember your ſins you now commit; *Your ſins*, mark it well, becauſe I know it is harſh to men, and contrary to ſenſe and reaſon, yet it muſt be true, becauſe the Lord hath ſpoken it; *Your ſins, and your iniquities, I will remember no more.* You will ſay, when? I anſwer, when God is entered into covenant with a people; *And this ſhall be the covenant I will make in thoſe days*, ſaith the Lord, *I will ſprinkle you with clean water, and your ſins and iniquities I will remember no more.*

How can this be, you will ſay, is God grown ſo forgetful, that he takes no notice, that at this inſtant I ſin, and cannot he remember I ſin? This ſeems to be a mighty ſtrange argument.

Now ſuppoſe I could not anſwer this; is this a truth that God ſaith, or no, *Your ſins and your iniquities I will remember no more?* If this be not a truth, then the word of God is un-true, and then farewel all the ground upon which a perſon ought to build; but let God be true, and every man a liar; therefore, to clear it, I ſay, God remembers, and knows well enough that we act this: his meaning then is, I will remember them no more, to hit you in the teeth with them; I will have no more to ſay to you for theſe tranſgreſſions you now commit; for all that he has to ſay againſt iniquity, againſt this preſent iniquity committed; he hath ſaid it over to Chriſt already, when he

was upon the croſs; and this ſin now committed, was then in the remembrance of God; he took the full payment for it, and for that ſin that ſhall be committed to-morrow, unto the end of the world, he took all the payment of Chriſt; therefore he will never repeat them over to you; this is God's way, not to hit his people in covenant in the teeth, nor upbraid them with any ſin they commit; this is plain in the latter end of the text, *Not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them:* as if he had ſaid, I will never call you to an account for the ſins you commit; I will never tax you for them; you ſhall be in mine eyes as if you did not ſin; all that I mean to aſk, I have it already, at the hands of my Son; *I have beheld the travail of his ſoul*, Iſa. liii. 11. *and am ſatisfied* with the beholding of it. In *Iſa.* xxvii. 4. you have a notable expreſſion, *Fury is not in me*, ſaith God. You will ſay how can that be? Is not God angry? Doth he not pour out his wrath, and vengeance? Doth not his fury burn againſt ſin? The prophet ſpeaks in the name of God in that place; *Fury is not in me:* but if you will read the paſſage well, obſerve it, and you ſhall find of what time the Lord ſpeaks this; he ſpeaks not of the preſent, but of a certain time that he propheſieth of. The Lord hath a vineyard, he watcheth over it, and waters it night and day; and this vineyard ſhall enlarge its borders, and ſhall ſpread itſelf over all the world: the meaning then is this; there is a time to come, wherein the people of the Lord, the vine of the Lord ſhall ſpread itſelf, not in the garden

garden of *Iſrael* only, but all the world over; that is, the Gentiles ſhall be received into fellowſhip with God, as well as the *Jews*; Chriſt ſhall come, and pull down the wall of partition; and the goſpel of Chriſt ſhall be preached all the world over; then, *Fury ſhall not be in me*; when Chriſt hath offered up himſelf, and perfected for ever them that are ſanctified, then the Lord hath no more fury to pour out upon ſuch as are in him: when your reconciliation is made with God; know from the firſt time of it till your laſt breath, there ſhall not be the leaſt fury in God to you; for that is poured out upon Chriſt already, and there is not one drop of that poiſon to be poured out upon you. *Iſa.* liv. 9. Is a moſt admirable place; *As I have ſworn* (ſaith the Lord) *that the waters of* Noah *ſhall no more go over the earth, ſo have I ſworn that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.* What not God be wroth with, nor ſo much as rebuke perſons? Yea, ſo ſaith the Lord, *I will not be wroth, I have ſworn unto thee, that as the waters of* Noah, *&c.* You know the Lord made a covenant, that there ſhould never come a flood to drown the world any more; this covenant is firm, ſo as that the water ſhall drown all the world again, before God will be wroth with his people any more; when is this? Look into the beginning of the chapter, and you ſhall ſee; when the *Jews* ſhall inherit the Gentiles, then it ſhall be.

But you will ſay, The Lord in that chapter ſaith, *For a little moment have I hid my face; in a little wrath I hid it*, verſe 8. and therefore it

ſeems God was wroth and angry, then, when he ſaid he would not be wroth, and with the ſame people.

But mark it well, there is a great miſtake, as if the Lord ſpake all in that chapter to the ſame people; he diſtinguiſheth between his preſent dealing with them, and with his people afterwards, when the Gentiles ſhall come into his fold; indeed it is true, he ſaith, he forſook this church as the wife of his youth, *But with everlaſting kindneſs will I have mercy upon thee*, ſaith he: there was a time in which the Lord was wroth, and hid his face; but there is a time when he will not only be kind, but will have mercy with everlaſting kindneſs; that is, a kindneſs that hath no intervenings of wrath mixed, but that holds out, an everlaſting love; and this mercy without any wrath between, ſhould be when the people of the *Jews* ſhould inherit the Gentiles; when the fulneſs of the Gentiles ſhall come in, by Chriſt's taking away the wall of partition.

In brief, know this is as a certain truth, God once reconciled is ſo for ever; God is not ſuch a changeling as to be reconciled to day, and fall out to-morrow again; God when he is once become friends with a man, he is ſo for ever; nothing ſhall break ſquares between God and him.

Again, Conſider by what means this reconciliation is wrought, and then it will be manifeſt unto you that God cannot be angry, it's by Chriſt; *God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf.* I aſk this queſtion, did Chriſt fully ſatisfy the indignation

dignation of God, or did he ſatisfy it only in part, leaving ſome remainders of it for the creature to come after and bear? If Chriſt did not fully ſatisfy indignation, he is but a piece of a Saviour; he did not ſave to the uttermoſt; he ſhould be no perfect Saviour, if he did not ſatisfy the wrath of God to the uttermoſt; but if he did fully ſatisfy, as God himſelf *beheld the travail of his ſoul, and was ſatisfied*; then all indignation is paſt. Look as it is with men that are to make accounts; ſuppoſe a man ſhould account for a hundred ſeveral ſums, theſe accounts are not ſatisfied, except he ſatisfy and pay every ſum; if he pay ninety-nine ſums, and leaves but one unpaid, the creditor is not ſatisfied. Either Chriſt hath paid all, or ſome muſt come after to pay the reſt; certainly, indignation never ceaſes till there be ſatisfaction. Either God hath ſatisfaction perfectly in Chriſt, or a believer muſt pay the remainder; either he hath the full of Chriſt, or a believer himſelf muſt ſatisfy. Suppoſe that Chriſt had ſatisfied God's indignation for all ſins but one, and a believer muſt ſatisfy that one; that one is enough to damn him for ever; for he cannot give ſatisfaction for one ſin.

If Chriſt hath ſatisfied for all, and hath taken away the whole indignation, how can God come and pour out new indignation?

And (to conclude) know this, that this perfect reconciliation, this peace with God, is not a thing now to be agitated, and controverted in heaven; as if there were an act of parliament now in hand,

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in hope it will paſs, which muſt have ſome fear with it, leaſt it ſhould miſcarry; but God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelf. Let me tell you, whoever you are, that can claim a part in Chriſt, your reconciliation is finiſhed to your hands; Chriſt is not now making reconciliation in heaven for you; *God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world to himſelf:* he is not now reconciling; the thing is finiſhed; your reconciliation is compleat. God hath paſt it not only by vote and conſent in heaven, but he hath paſt it upon record under his hand, in the miniſtry of the goſpel; we hold out to you, reconciliation done; we do not hold it forth as doing, or to be done with him; but it is done with him; if you do but cloſe with it, the thing is finiſhed for you.

SERMON XIV.

Chriſt's Free Welcome to all Comers.

JOHN vi. 37.

And him that cometh to me, I will in no wiſe caſt out, or caſt off.

THESE are the words of our Saviour; the occaſion was this, he having not only a natural ſympathy and compaſſion, but alſo being a ſpiritual phyſician, diſperſes abroad common mercies in an extraordinary

traordinary manner. In the former chapter, he is plentiful in healing the ſick, and curing many diſeaſes; natural men, being ſenſible of ſuch kindneſſes, flocked mightily after him. And, tho' Chriſt knew well enough what they were, as you ſhall ſee by-and-by, yet he ſhuts not the bowels of compaſſion from them in extremity: there were many ready to faint; now, rather than they ſhould want ſupply, he would work another miracle, and, with a few loaves and fiſhes, ſatisfy thouſands of them, and ſo he doth. This people finding good chear, they are like dogs, can ſcarce leave the houſe, (bear with the expreſſion, for they were no better, for all their flocking to Chriſt) I ſay, they were ſo eager to follow him, no ground ſhould hold them. Chriſt takes ſhip and goes over-ſea to *Capernaum*; no country is too cold for them; nay, the ſea itſelf ſhall not part Chriſt and them; after him they will go.

Well, they come to him; and, becauſe he had been ſo kind to feed them, they think they may be familiar with him; and, therefore, after their carnal faſhion, begin to put queſtions unto him, I ſay, in a fleſhly way: in a low faſhion they begin to argue with him, *How came he there?* ſuch poor ſilly ſtuff they object to him. Well, tho' Chriſt had natural compaſſion, yet he will not ſooth them in their folly and ſimplicity, but deals roundly with them, and tells them plainly, they were miſtaken in him, if they thought his excellency did ſtand in working miracles for food, for bread; he came on a higher errand, and a buſineſs of

greater

greater conſequence; and, therefore, tells them plainly, it was another buſineſs he came about; their thoughts muſt riſe higher than the loaves; *Labour not for the meat that periſheth, but for that which endureth unto eternal life.* He comes about eternal life, he brings that which might produce that unto them, and therefore counſels them to look after it. Well, becauſe they are in talk, they hold it on, tho' to little purpoſe; and put another queſtion to Chriſt, *What ſhall we do, that we may work the works of God?* Naturally men are upon doing to get; when we talk of matters of religion, it is doing gets every thing; therefore, they will be doing, that they may have ſomething: now, tho' Chriſt doth not anſwer the queſtion they made, being a ſilly one, yet he gives them another anſwer that was to the purpoſe; *This is the work of God, to believe in him whom he hath ſent.* Never look to get it by doing; look to get it from him, and not from yourſelves, and your own doings.

When Chriſt had made that anſwer, they began to be a little angry with him, and to put a cavilling queſtion, or a queſtion by way of exception againſt him; *What ſign ſheweſt thou,* (ſay they) *that we may ſee and believe?* Moſes *gave us this bread from heaven*; (ſpeaking of manna) What doth Chriſt tell them of life that he brings? What, is he better than *Moſes?* Will he give better bread than manna was? Well, (for all their heat, paſſion, and peeviſhneſs) he will anſwer them again; *Moſes did not give you that bread from heaven*; and again,

again, *Your fathers did eat manna, and are dead:* here he takes them off from their great Rabbi, whom they mentioned, as if he was their Chriſt; and alſo from their objection; ſaying, that the manna, they did eat, was but ſatisfactory for a time, there was not life in it; they that did eat it are dead; and, therefore, he comes to make application, and to ſhew wherein he excelled *Moſes*, and, wherein that bread he brings, exceeds manna, verſe 35. *He that comes to me, ſhall not hunger*; *and he that believes in me, ſhall not thirſt*; they eat manna, and yet were empty for all that; they drank of the rock *Moſes* ſmote, and yet they were athirſt again; *But he that comes to me, ſhall not hunger*; I have ſo much as ſhall ſatisfy, there ſhall be no lack at all.

After Chriſt had made this diſcourſe, he begins to deal plainly with them indeed, and tells them, *Though they had ſeen, yet they believed not.* It may be ſome diſcouragement to men, that labour in the vineyard of the Lord, to ſee ſmall fruit of their labours; but here, you ſee, Chriſt himſelf took a great deal of pains with theſe men, and all to little purpoſe, or rather to no purpoſe at all: therefore, in ver. 37. Chriſt comforts himſelf againſt that common diſ-comfort; which was, tho' theſe men believe not, yet, *All that the Father hath given me, ſhall come to me*; I ſhall have all that I expect; I never look for more than the Father gives me; and of thoſe, that he gives, I ſhall loſe none: and then afterwards, in the words of the text, he comforts thoſe that do come; theſe,

theſe, that would not come, he leaves, and falls to conſolation for his people that do come; *He that comes to me, I will in no wiſe caſt him out.*

The doctrine the words afford, will be natural, it ſhall not vary a jot from the very words of the Holy Ghoſt; *He that comes* to Chriſt, he *will in no wiſe caſt him out:* mark it well, beloved, there is abundance of life in it, to thoſe whoſe eyes the Lord will be pleaſed to open, to behold the fulneſs in it; I ſay, he that comes to Chriſt, it is no matter who, nor what he be; there is nothing in the world can be conſidered as an hinderance to his coming; if he do but come, he may be certain of this, *he ſhall in no wiſe be caſt out*; there is no man under heaven, be he as vile as can poſſibly be imagined, if he do but come to Chriſt, even while he is ſo, ſhall be rejected of him, or have a repulſe. Beloved, I deſire the doctrine itſelf may be printed and ſtamped in your ſpirits.

Give me leave to ſpeak a few words in general, before I come to particulars: I know, I may ſpeak that which will be offence to ſome, but I muſt ſpeak the truth of the Lord, whatever men ſay. I ſay, whatever thou art in this congregation, ſuppoſe a drunkard, a whore-maſter, a ſwearer, a blaſphemer and perſecutor, a mad-man in iniquity, could'ſt thou but come to Jeſus Chriſt; I ſay, come, only come, it is no matter tho' there be no alteration in the world in thee [u], in that inſtant when

[u] That is, no alteration viſible to him, or others; none in his heart that he can obſerve, or take any encouragement from; nor any in his life and converſation obſervable to men; otherwiſe,

when thou doſt come; I ſay, at that inſtant, though thou be thus vile, as can be imagined, come to Chriſt; he is un-true if he put thee out; *In no wiſe*, ſaith he, *will I caſt out.*

There

wiſe, there muſt be an alteration in him, or it is impoſſible for him to come to Chriſt, that is, believe in him; he muſt have grace given him to draw him, or he will never come, he cannot, *Joh.* vi. 44,--65. The deſires of the ſoul muſt be towards Chriſt; there muſt be a ſight of him, and of both the want and worth of him: but the ſenſe is, that a man that has been ever ſo vile, even to the very inſtant that he is called, and directed to Chriſt, and while he can ſee nothing elſe but ſin in him, he ſhould not ſtay for any preparations and qualifications in him fitting him for Chriſt; that is, 'till his heart is cleanſed, and his life reformed, but as vile a ſinner as he is, and in the view of all the notorious ſins he has lived in, ſhould go to Chriſt, and venture his ſoul on him. The deſign of theſe expreſſions, however offenſive they may be to ſome, is not to encourage men in ſin; nor do they ſuppoſe, that men, upon coming to Chriſt, may, or will continue ſuch as they have been before; for an alteration in heart and life, follows at once upon coming to Chriſt; by faith the heart is purified; that works by love, and is attended with the fruits of righteouſneſs; but to ſhew that nothing ſhould hinder or diſcourage ſenſible ſinners, tho' ever ſo vile, from immediate coming to Chriſt, and that nothing will hinder him from receiving ſuch, and that ſuch ſhould not wait for any qualifications to fit them for him, and if they had them, ſhould not bring them to him for that purpoſe; but ſhould come as ſinners, and commit their ſouls unto him, believing in him unto ſalvation. Thus *Saul*, in the heighth of his rebellion, when his heart and mouth were filled with blaſphemy againſt Chriſt, and bitterneſs againſt his people, and in the full purſuit of theſe luſts, the Lord called him by his grace, and revealed his Son in him; Chriſt appeared to him; light ſhone around him; grace reached his heart, and brought him at once to the feet of Jeſus; hence he ſays, *I, who was before a blaſphemer, a perſecutor, and injurious perſon, I obtained mercy*; on which *Beza* has theſe words, *Hæc ſunt opera preparatoria*, (or, as in his *Major Annotations, en merita preparationis) theſe are the preparatory works* the apoſtle ſets himſelf off with; for nothing intervenes between his having been all this, and his obtaining mercy, as the cauſe of it, or as fitting him for it; and had he been guilty of adultery, drunkenneſs, and ſwearing, (crimes not greater than what he had been guilty of) he could, and no doubt would have ſaid, I *Paul*, the adulterer, the drunkard, the ſwearer, I obtained mercy.

There are two ſorts of people in the world, that are given by the Father to Chriſt, who yet, for the preſent, do not actually come to him.

Firſt, There are a ſort of men in the world, elected indeed, but, for the preſent, are wild aſſes upon the mountains, ſnuffing up the wind, and as deſperate in iniquity, as the verieſt reprobate under heaven; and yet there ſhall not be rejection of theſe perſons when they come; I ſay, whenſoever they come, though as ſinful as their ſkins can hold; yet when they come to Chriſt, they ſhall not be caſt out; for the preſent indeed, they deſpiſe their birth-right, they ſcorn the grace of God, and caſt it at their heels.

But there are a ſecond ſort of people given by God to Chriſt, that have not received him, and are not actually come to him; and yet for the preſent are wrought upon to be a willing people in ſome ſort; that is, the Lord hath dealt thus far with them, fain they would cloſe with Chriſt, fain they would conclude an intereſt and portion in him; oh! it would be welcome to them; it would be life to them, to be certainly ſatisfied, that his blood is their ranſom, and that their ſins are blotted out thereby; I ſay, fain they would, but they dare not yet cloſe with Chriſt for their lives; they dare not ſet up their reſt here; they dare not ſit down with any ſuch concluſion; but ſtill there is ſomething or other, that remains, that muſt be removed out of the way, before they can make this certain concluſion, Chriſt is theirs: now, my principal errand is, at this time, to this latter

latter ſort of people; a people, I ſay, whoſe hearts tell them, if it could appear clearly, that without danger to them, they may ſay, Chriſt is their ſalvation, and ſit down with this; if they could be ſatisfied with it, rather than their lives they would have Jeſus Chriſt, but they dare not: ſomething or other is wanting, they dare not lay hold upon him, and it is preſumption for them to ſit down ſatisfied, Chriſt is theirs; this is the generation I am at preſent to deal with, and to declare, by the power of Jeſus Chriſt, his clear mind to them, and by that power to pluck them out of the mire, wherein for the preſent they ſtick faſt.

And that I may the better come upon the ſpirits of ſuch loaden perſons, let us conſider theſe three things:

Firſt, What this coming to Chriſt is, that is here ſpoken of.

Secondly, What his purpoſe is in propoſing this coming to him.

Thirdly, What he means by this expreſſion of his, *I will in no wiſe caſt him out.*

I ſhall ſpeak briefly of the two former, becauſe the life of Chriſt's purpoſe lies in the laſt of theſe particulars.

Firſt, What doth Chriſt mean by coming unto him? In verſe 35. he will give you his mind himſelf, *He that comes unto me ſhall not hunger, and he that believes in me ſhall not thirſt*; mark it well, he makes coming and believing, in ſenſe, all one: for if you obſerve it, ſuch as Chriſt deals withal they are unſatisfied and empty ones; now he ſatis-

fies the empty; and whoſe emptineſs will he fill? even of thoſe that believe in him, that come to him: believing and coming therefore are all one, ſo that to come to Chriſt, is to believe in him. But we are as far to ſeek as we were, you will ſay, what is that believing on Chriſt? In *John* i. 12. you ſhall ſee what it is to believe on him; *As many as received him, to them he gave power to become the ſons of God, even to them that believe on his name.* Here he makes receiving and believing all one, as before he made coming and believing. The ſum in brief is this, the coming to Chriſt, is no more but the receiving of him for ſhelter and ſuccour. A man is ſaid to come to a ſtrong-hold, when he enters into it for his ſecurity and ſafety; he doth not ſtand hacking and hammering, ſhall I, or ſhall I not? but danger forces him, and in he gets, the door being open, and comes to his ſtrong-hold: ſo a perſon comes to Chriſt; Chriſt opening, he ſlips in, and ventures himſelf with him, and caſts himſelf into his arms, and he will ſink or ſwim with him.

Beloved, whoever you are that can but come to him, be you what you will, or may be, I ſay, if you come to him, to venture yourſelves upon the rock Chriſt, to ſink or ſwim, as he will ſupport or ſink under you, counting him a refuge, to have him for your ſuccour; *In no wiſe will he caſt you out.*

But, *Secondly*, to what purpoſe doth Chriſt propoſe coming here, will ſome ſay? Beloved, I propound this the rather, becauſe I conceive men miſtake

miſtake the mind of Chriſt, concerning this coming. You muſt not imagine, that our motion of coming is the *primum mobile* that gives motion to Chriſt to open and entertain; as if our coming did ſtir him up to ſet open, and give entrance: Chriſt hath not any ſuch thought in him, that we muſt come, and therefore will own us for his own; for it is certainly true, the very motion of our coming to Chriſt, is from himſelf, and from his coming to us, before we do ſo much as move. It is a common principle known to all divines, and moſt people; we are firſt acted, and then we act, *acti agimus. Firſt*, Chriſt gives to us to come, and then, by his gift, we come to him; we muſt not imagine, by coming to Chriſt, he is moved and invited towards us, and is ſtirred up to open to us, and give entertainment to us; but his firſt coming to us, and living in us, ſtirs us up to motion: *You that were dead in ſins and treſpaſſes*, (Epheſ. ii. 1.) *hath he quickened.* Beloved, is there death, till Chriſt quickens? Where then can there be this motion of ours, before he himſelf be come with his life? Where there is no life, you know there is no motion; and, till the fountain of life communicates it, there can be none; therefore it is Chriſt that gives this coming unto men, and he having given it, they come to him.

But what is the purpoſe of Chriſt then, in ſpeaking of coming here, as if this were a preparation, or a previous condition, that there is no portion in Chriſt, till there be firſt coming?

I anſwer, Mark the ſcope well, you ſhall find Chriſt doth not intend a neceſſary condition, but the removal of all objections; he doth not intend to put us on doing to get him, but to take away all obſtacles that may hinder us from coming to him: and the emphaſis of the text doth not lie upon coming, but upon this, *In no wiſe will I caſt them off:* as if he had ſaid, you are poor wretches; you think I am ſo hard hearted, I will caſt you off, you are ſo ſinful: but let not this trouble you; whatever ſinfulneſs you have, that in common apprehenſion may hinder me from receiving you coming to me, for all this I will not caſt you out when you come. As when a man ſays to a poor man, come to my houſe, I will give you ſomething; he propoſeth no conditions, but grace to him; you ſhall have ſomething, I will give you this and that.

But, I will come to the *Third*, the main thing I intend at this time, namely, what Chriſt intends when he ſaith, *I will in no wiſe caſt you out*. Oh! the depth and unſearchable grace that is comprehended in theſe few words! If it might ſhine with its own brightneſs to your ſpirits, how would you go away leaping and rejoycing, with joy unſpeakable and glorious! Why the Lord is able to communicate to you, above all we are able to aſk or think. *I will in no wiſe caſt you out*; do but come, and nothing, I ſay, nothing ſhall ſtand between me and you, to put a bar to hinder an entrance to me.

There are two eſtates whereto this grace mentioned

tioned may belong; either that eſtate wherein is the breaking forth of the firſt light to the ſoul; or that eſtate wherein, after light is broken forth, darkneſs ſeems to come again in the place of it; and this paſſage of Chriſt hath reference to both theſe eſtates.

Firſt, The firſt eſtate wherein light begins firſt to break out, the firſt dawning of the light of Chriſt. To give you an inſtance, and ſo bring the buſineſs cloſe; ſuppoſe a perſon, as the apoſtle does, *Eph.* ii. 2. *You, who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, hath he quickened; wherein in times paſt ye walked, according to the courſe of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, that now rules in the children of diſobedience:* I ſay, ſuppoſe a perſon to be in the worſt condition you can imagine; ſingle out the vileſt man in the world, the notableſt drunkard that ever breathed, the greateſt whore-maſter, and the lewdeſt perſon that can be imagined; ſuch a perſon as this, and continuing to this very inſtant, now before the Lord, as he was before, without any change and alteration in the world until this time; ſuppoſe ſuch a perſon; by this text it appears ſo manifeſt, that if the Lord do but grant, and hath but put a willingneſs and readineſs of ſpirit into this man [w], that Chriſt he would have, if it might appear he might have him; if his heart do but ſay, I would have him, all that ſinfulneſs, tho' to this inſtant

[w] Here you ſee clearly the Dr. ſuppoſes willingneſs and readineſs of ſpirit to come to Chriſt, put into ſuch a ſinner; which is owing to power and grace thus making willing, and ſuch a ſoul will never be rejected let him be ever ſo vile.

continued in, is no bar in the world, but this man may claim his portion in Chriſt, and have as certain ſecurity, that his portion is there, as any other man may have. Mark well, I ſay, this paſſage, *I will in wiſe caſt him out:* our Saviour plainly imports that there neither is, nor can be deviſed, no not by God himſelf, any one conſideration whatſoever, which might occaſion him to put off, or ſay nay, to any one that comes: no conſideration in the world, I ſay, can ſo aggravate a man's condition, could he make it as bad as the devils themſelves; yet, if there be but a coming to Chriſt, there can be no conſideration in the higheſt pitch of ſinfulneſs for him to reject, or put by a perſon coming to him; for, you muſt know, Chriſt is well acquainted with all the objections the heart of man (nay the devil) can make againſt the freeneſs of his grace, and life by him; to ſave labour, therefore, in this one paſſage, *I will in no wiſe caſt out*, Chriſt at once anſwers all the objections that could be made. And I dare be bold to maintain, in his name and ſtead; let a man but ſay, and lay down this for granted, come he would, Chriſt he would have rather than his life; let this be granted for a truth, I will be bold with Chriſt out of this paſſage to anſwer ten thouſand objections, even fully to the ſilencing of every one that can be made: *I will in no wiſe caſt him out*; that is, I will upon no conſideration that can be imagined and conceived. I know the objections are many, and they ſeem to be very ſtrong, in reſpect of ſuch a perſon to whom the Lord hath given a willingneſs

neſs and deſire of ſpirit to cloſe with Chriſt, and yet dare not do the thing; I ſay, they are many, and very ſtrong; but, let them be what they will, you ſhall ſee by-and-by they come to no value in the world, there is no ſtrength in them. Let me tell you, the Lord hath ſent me, at this time, *to proclaim liberty to ſuch captives*, that are in this ſad, bitter, and (to their thinking) deſperate condition; liberty God hath given thee, if thou wilt come freely; nothing in the world ſhall hinder thee.

But let us conſider the objections that may be made, and therein ſee what ground poor ſinners may have to forſake their own mercy, and ſo become their own tormentors.

I dare not cloſe with Chriſt, (ſaith many a poor ſoul) if I ſit down and cloſe with him, being ſatisfied with this argument, Chriſt offers himſelf to ſinners, this is preſumption; why ſo? I am the filthieſt creature that ever breathed; I ſhould ſtink above ground with my ſins, if you knew what a creature I am, and what an ungodly ſinner I am; I am a blaſphemer; I do nothing but blaſpheme the God of heaven; and I blaſpheme his word to perſecution; my ſpirit is mad againſt the goſpel itſelf.

I anſwer, in a word, reckon up all you can imagine, ſuppoſe the worſt you can conceive, the truth of the worſt, that you have not belied yourſelves a jot, in propoſing the abominable filthineſs and loathſome baſeneſs of your filthy condition; ſuppoſe this be imagined; what of this? Surely, as long as I am in this caſe, Chriſt cannot belong

to me, there is no coming to him for me. If this be truth that you ſay, that ſuch and ſuch filthineſs ſtands between Chriſt and you, that tho' you come, there could be no entertainment with him for you; ſuppoſing this to be true, this that Chriſt ſpeaks, is moſt certainly falſe; for, ſaith he, *I will in no wiſe caſt you off*; that is, upon no conſideration will I caſt you off. You ſay, upon this conſideration, I am ſo abominably vile, there will be caſting off; if this you ſay be true, that Chriſt ſaith, muſt be falſe; there is a point-blank contradiction between theſe two; and, therefore, either Chriſt muſt call in theſe words again, thus generally delivered, and he muſt put in this exception, that you put in, or elſe his word and yours cannot agree.

You ſay, upon ſuch conſiderations, there is no admittance; and upon ſuch and ſuch there is admittance; Chriſt ſaith, *I will in no wiſe caſt you out*; notwithſtanding this conſideration I will receive you, be you what you will, do but come, and, for all that, you ſhall be welcome.

But, ſome will ſay, men muſt be fitted for Chriſt, before he will ever own them.

I anſwer again, Is there this exception put into the grant of Chriſt, except you be fitted for me, I will caſt you out? Then you may ſay indeed, except you be fitted for him he will caſt you out; but, then, I ſay, how can this be true, *I will in no wiſe caſt him out?* The words muſt run thus, *Him that comes to me*, (if he be fitted and prepared) *I will in no wiſe caſt out*; but, if he be not fitted and prepared,

prepared, I will caſt him out; but do they run ſo? Chriſt looks not for fitneſs, but people may be capable of communion with him, without fitneſs; he takes them into communion with himſelf, and afterwards fits them for it, as he would have them; but, before-hand, there is no fitneſs; ſuppoſe what fitneſs you will, in expecting the grant, I ſay, in expecting the grant of Chriſt, fitneſs or not fitneſs is all one; *Come to me, I will in no wiſe caſt you out.*

Peradventure, tho' the text ſeems to be clear, yet you will ſay, Surely the grace of God is not ſo large as you ſeem to expreſs it? There muſt be ſomething expected and conſidered in the perſon coming, or there will be no receiving and entertaining by Chriſt.

I anſwer, It were an eaſy thing, (if time would give leave) to ſhew, that thro' the whole ſcripture, the Lord Chriſt hath ſuch a purpoſe to ſet forth the glory of the grace of his Father, as that he will have men know, that all the fitneſs of perſons, to communicate or participate of Chriſt, is their deſperate ſinfulneſs; I ſay, nothing but ſinfulneſs is that which is the fitneſs that Chriſt looks for in men [x]. I beſeech you, peruſe that paſſage, never to be forgotten, (*Ezek.* xvi.) where the Holy Ghoſt, in the beginning of the chapter, firſt ſtates the caſe concerning the condition of perſons; then makes the concluſion, the ſtate being granted. Suppoſe your condition of ſinfulneſs riſe up to the

[x] Not what makes a ſoul lovely to Chriſt, but what makes Chriſt neceſſary and ſuitable to that.

the height of the illuſtration there mentioned of a child polluted in its blood; which kind of expreſſion, the Holy Ghoſt uſeth, as that which doth, of all other things in the world, moſt ſet out the loathſome naſtineſs, and intolerable filthineſs of ſin in men; *Thy father was an* Amorite, *thy mother was an* Hittite; *in the day of thy nativity thy navel was not cut, thou waſt polluted in thy blood, neither waſt thou waſhed with water to ſupple thee, thou waſt not ſalted at all, nor ſwadled at all; and no eye pitied thee, to do any of theſe things unto thee; but thou waſt caſt out, to the loathing of thy perſon.* Here is the nature of the ſinfulneſs of perſons polluted in blood. There was ſuch a filthy loathſomeneſs in this pollution, that it was beyond the pity of any creature; it was ſo abominably filthy, that there was no place for pity; nay, more, ſuch pollution of blood there was, that did occaſion caſting out, as if the abiding of that perſon in the room any longer, would poiſon all the reſt; and, therefore, becauſe there could not be an enduring of that loathſomeneſs any longer, there muſt be flinging out upon the dunghill.

Suppoſe your ſins riſe to this very height, and there is ſuch a ſtench of filthineſs in them, that all the world ſhould even vomit to think of that ſinfulneſs that you have acted and committed; what of all this? Surely, you will ſay, there is no portion in Chriſt for me, as long as my caſe is ſuch a caſe as this. Obſerve the ſtrange expreſſion of the Holy Ghoſt, *When I paſſed by thee, and ſaw thee polluted in thy blood, I ſaid unto thee, Live*; there

there is a great deal of difference between ſaying, *Live*, and *caſting out* of ſuch perſons; when no eye pitied thee, that time which was the time of thy blood, *that time was the time of love.* This is ſtrange indeed, that all the creatures in the world ſhould even ſpue out ſuch a perſon, as ſhould be ſo abominable, that men ſhould abhor him; and yet the time of ſuch pollution, ſhould be Chriſt's time of love. Well, but you will ſay, Surely, before Chriſt will communicate himſelf, and give up himſelf to ſuch men, for all this, the caſe muſt be altered with them; you ſhall ſee it is no ſuch matter, but directly the contrary; *Thy time was the time of love, and I ſpread my ſkirt over thee, and covered thy nakedneſs; yea, I ſware unto thee, ſaith the Lord God, and thou becameſt mine.* What ſtrange expreſſions are here! Methinks your hearts cannot but be wrapped up into heaven, in admiration of them: theſe the Lord aggravates to the higheſt terms that can be imagined; ſetting forth the moſt horrible loathſomeneſs of the ſinfulneſs of men; and yet that time of ſinfulneſs, was the time of God's love; and not only ſo, but a time wherein God ſware to, and entered into covenant with this perſon, and became his.

But you will ſay, there was ſome cleanſing before. You ſhall ſee the Holy Ghoſt in the next words makes it appear it is not ſo; mark the words well, *Then waſhed I thee with water; yea, I throughly waſhed away thy blood:* then, when I entered into covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine. Here was not firſt a waſhing, and then ſwearing,

ſwearing, and entering into covenant; but there was firſt ſwearing and entering into covenant, and then waſhing with water afterwards: here is a coming and cloſing with Jeſus Chriſt, even while the ſtate of a perſon is the filthieſt in the world; and I tell you, beloved, either you muſt cloſe with Chriſt for your comfort, as you are in no other condition in the word, but filthy, ſtinking creatures, or you muſt never receive him while you live. *Chriſt came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance.* You that will bring righteouſneſs with you, to be received of Chriſt; I tell you, he came not to ſave ſuch perſons; *Chriſt came to ſave that which was loſt: he died for the ungodly*, Rom. v. 6.

But, you will ſay, for all this high aggravation of loathſomeneſs of ſinfulneſs, my caſe is worſe then all this that you ſpeak of; therefore there is ſomething in my condition, that if I come to Chriſt he muſt caſt me off; here is nothing but poſitive filthineſs: it is true, indeed, this condition is very bad, but my caſe riſes higher; beſides a poſitive loathſomeneſs in myſelf, I am a rebel, a ſturdy enemy, I fight againſt God, I quarrel with him, and take up arms againſt him. Imagine your condition a condition of as great enmity and madneſs againſt God, as your hearts can poſſibly deviſe; what then? Sure you will ſay, If I be ſuch an enemy, I muſt lay down arms before Chriſt will have to do with me, or admit me to come to him. Will a king let a cut-throat traitor, while he hath thoughts in his heart to murder him, will he

he let him come with a naked knife into his preſence, and graciouſly embrace him in his arms?

For anſwer, Still ſee the cloſe of the text, obſerve that if this be true, that in reſpect of this rebelliouſneſs in thy ſpirit againſt God, thou ſayeſt, if I come, Chriſt will caſt me off; theſe words [*in no wiſe*] cannot be true; for here is a conſideration, as before, that makes an exception, and ſo fruſtrates thy entrance to Chriſt, though there be coming.

Beloved, do you think it was out of the thoughts of Chriſt, to wit, your enmity, and rebellion? And if he thought of it, do you think he would not have put it in? Surely he was wiſe enough, and knew what he ſaid, and certainly had rebelliouſneſs itſelf in his thoughts when he ſpake the words, *in no wiſe*; and certainly this ſhall not prejudice you, but if you come to Chriſt, he is as much yours as if you never took up arms againſt him.

But to clear up this truth to you more fully, look into *Pſal.* lxviii. 18. *Thou haſt aſcended up on high, and haſt led captivity captive, and thou haſt received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them.* Mark it well; you ſay there is no dwelling for Chriſt with rebels, that is your poſition; I am a rebel, there can be no entertainment with him for me: but, ſaith the text (note it I pray) *He received gifts for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them.* If that be not clear enough, look into *Rom.* v. 6, 7, 8. *If when we were enemies,*

we

we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we ſhall be ſaved; mark the expreſſion, it is a ſtrange one; you muſt directly deny the truth of what the apoſtle ſays, if you will ſtand to this principle, that as long as you are enemies there is no admittance unto Chriſt for you; for, ſaith the text, *While we were enemies, we were reconciled*; not that Chriſt provided reconciliation for enemies, that when they be amended, they ſhall be ſaved, but during enmity itſelf they receive reconciliation.

I do not ſpeak this to the intent that any ſhould conceive that God leaves perſons rebellious, vile, and loathſome, as he finds them [y], when he cloſeth with them; but, I ſay, at that time when the Lord cloſeth with perſons, he cloſeth with them in ſuch a ſtate of rebellion; and if thou comeſt to Chriſt in this condition, it manifeſtly ſhall appear to thee, that he will open his boſom for thy head to reſt upon, as well as for the moſt righteous perſon in the world, and his breaſt for thy mouth to ſuck.

He ſhuts the door to none that comes; *Ho! every one that thirſteth, let him come and drink of the water of life freely*. Let *every one*; there is not one exempted; Yet, *not I*, ſaith one, *not I*, ſaith another; but the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, *let every one come*. No man under heaven that hath a heart to come, and ſuck of the breaſts of Chriſt, but the way is free

[y] And it ſhould be obſerved, that all before ſpoken, is ſaid to ſuch who are deemed ſenſible of their rebellion and vileneſs; and alſo under ſome temptations that Chriſt will not receive them, being ſo very ſinful.

free for him; the fountain is ſet open for all ſin and uncleanneſs: at the pool of *Betheſda* every impotent perſon might ſtep in; at the bath the pooreſt man in the world may go, if he will, and ſtep in; neither is the loathſomeſt perſon in the world excluded; now Chriſt is that bath opened for all comers; there is no comer ſhall ever be caſt off; I dare be bold to ſay, there never did miſcarry any perſon in the world that indeed did come to him; if there did any miſcarry, there is no credit to be given to the words of Chriſt himſelf.

But I ſee I muſt haſten: I come to conſider the power of this expreſſion to perſons that had the light riſen to them, but think now darkneſs is come over them again; I mean thoſe that have received Chriſt, and have believed, but ſomething or other hath happened, that even they ſuſpect, that if they ſhould come to him, he would caſt them off. But if the firſt propoſition be granted, that is diſcuſſed, then much more this: *He that ſpared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all; how ſhall he not with him give us all things*; Rom. viii. 32. *If while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled ſhall we be ſaved by his life*, Rom. v. 10. If while we are without ſtrength, Chriſt in due time died for the ungodly; if while we were ſinners he died for us, how much more ſhall we be ſaved from wrath being reconciled! All this is to ſhew, that if Chriſt did not ſhut out perſons in the worſt condition, when they had no acquaintance at all with him, much leſs will he caſt out

thoſe

thoſe that he hath had familiarity with in former times; there is no condition in the world a believer is ſubject to, that may occaſion the leaſt ſuſpicion that Chriſt will caſt him out, if he come.

But you will ſay, Suppoſe a believer falls into ſome ſcandalous ſins, and notorious ſins, it may be to commit murder and adultery together, as *David* did; ſurely now there is ſome cauſe of ſuſpicion, that if he come preſently to Chriſt after he commits theſe things, he will ſend him packing. I anſwer, If this be true, there muſt be a putting in of this exception into the text, if thou that art a believer commit ſuch and ſuch a ſin, though thou comeſt to me, I will caſt thee out; and if it be ſo, Chriſt muſt cut off that large expreſſion of his, *I will in no wiſe caſt thee out.*

You will ſay, this is ſtrange doctrine: ſuppoſe a believer commit adultery, and murder, may he preſently look upon Chriſt, and in him ſee a diſcharge of his ſins, and reconciliation by him, and part in him, at that very time he commits them? Surely there muſt be large humiliation, and confeſſion of theſe ſins; and there muſt be a long continuance in this too; he muſt not apply comfort preſently; there muſt be more brokenneſs of heart yet, and more yet, and more yet: this is the objection of the world.

I anſwer, I confeſs the crime is great in its kind, and, for the preſent, it may ſilence the voice of truth itſelf; but whatever becomes of it, that Chriſt may have the glory of his grace, and the glory of that fulneſs of redemption wrought all at once;

once; let me tell you, believers cannot commit thoſe ſins that may give juſt occaſion of ſuſpicion to them, that if they come to Chriſt he would caſt them out: let me not be miſtaken in that I ſay; I know the enemies of the goſpel will make an evil conſtruction of it; yet a believer, I ſay, cannot commit thoſe ſins that can give occaſion to him to ſuſpect, that if he come preſently to Chriſt, he would caſt him off.

But muſt not he confeſs firſt, and be afflicted in his ſoul, before he can think he ſhall be received if he come?

For anſwer to it; I deny not, but acknowledge, when a believer ſins, he muſt confeſs theſe ſins; and the greateſt end and ground of this confeſſion is that which *Joſhua* ſpeaks concerning *Achan*, *Joſh.* vii. 19. *My ſon, confeſs thy faults, and give glory to God.* A believer in confeſſion of ſin gives glory to the great God of heaven and earth; and that muſt be the glorious end of the confeſſion of his ſin, that God may be owned, as the ſole and only Saviour: except we acknowledge ſin, we cannot acknowledge ſalvation; we cannot acknowledge any virtue in the works and ſufferings of Chriſt; he might have ſaved his labour, and never come into the world; all that he did could not be acknowledged to be of worth to us, if there had not been ſin from which he ſhould ſave us: he that indeed confeſſes his ſin, confeſſes he had periſhed if Chriſt had not died for him; nay, he confeſſeth, that nothing in the world, but Chriſt, could ſave him.

Secondly, I grant, a believer ſhould be ſenſible of ſin, that is, of the nature of it; but this is that I mainly deſire to imprint upon your ſpirits, that he may certainly conclude, even before confeſſion of ſin, the reconciliation that is made between God and him, the intereſt he hath in Chriſt, and the love of Chriſt embracing him: in a word, before a believer confeſſes his ſin, he may be as certain of the pardon of it, as after confeſſion [z]. I ſay, there is as much ground to be confident of the pardon of ſin to a believer, as ſoon as ever he hath committed it, though he hath not made a ſolemn act of confeſſion, as to believe it after he hath performed all the humiliation in the world. What is the ground of the pardon of ſin? *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions, for mine own name's ſake:* here is pardon, and the fountain of it is in God himſelf. What is it that diſcharges a believer? the riſe of it is God's own ſake: if this be the ground of pardon, then this being held out, a believer may be aſſured of pardon as ſoon as he commits any ſin, and may cloſe

[z] Not that confeſſion of ſin is a needleſs thing; the Dr. has before obſerved, that when a believer ſins, he muſt confeſs his ſins, and points out the ends, for which confeſſion is to be made; but then he is not to conſider this as the ground or cauſe of the forgiveneſs of ſin; but being under a ſenſe of ſin committed, is at once to look to Chriſt, and deal with his blood for the pardon of it; and not ſtay until a ſolemn, formal confeſſion, is made, as if his pardon depended on that: we are to confeſs ſin, as *Aaron* confeſſed the ſins of *Iſrael*, over the ſcape-goat; and we ſhould confeſs ours over a ſin-bearing Saviour, with a view to their being laid on him, and ſatisfied for, by him; and never does a ſoul more ingenuouſly confeſs ſin, or more kindly mourn for it, than when he has the cleareſt view of the free, and full forgiveneſs of it, by the blood of Chriſt.

cloſe with it. Pardon of ſin depends upon the unchangeableneſs of God, and not on the ſtability of the creature: all the pardon in the world that any perſon ſhall enjoy, is revealed in this word of grace; and it is the moſt abſurd thing in the world to think, that the ſoul may fetch out a pardon any where, but in the word of grace. Is pardon held out in it, and held out to ſinners, as they are ſinners? And doth God hold out his love to perſons before good or evil be done by them, that the purpoſe of God may ſtand according to election, not of works, but of grace? And doth a believer find it thus in the word of grace, and may not he reſt upon it when he finds it? I beſeech you conſider; either Chriſt did not reckon with the Father for all the ſins of his people one with another, when he did offer up himſelf, or he did; if he left out ſuch and ſuch a ſcandalous ſin when he reckoned with him, then Chriſt did not ſave to the utmoſt all them that come to God by him; then there muſt come another ſaviour, to reckon for that which he left out.

Well, you will ſay, Chriſt did reckon for all ſin with his Father; if he did reckon with him for all, then did he pay him the full price for every one, when he died upon the croſs. Then the Father being paid, ſatisfaction was acknowledged from his hand; he hath beheld the travail of his ſoul, and he is ſatisfied; *And the blood of Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin*, 1 John i. 7. Well, doth God acknowledge full ſatisfaction for all ſin under hand and ſeal? If it be ſo, what ground is there

of ſuſpicion that Chriſt will not receive you, but caſt you off for ſuch and ſuch tranſgreſſions, rather than for ſuch and ſuch? If the reckoning were for all, wherefore do you make ſuch a diſtinction, where God makes none? If it be made for all, one with another, and the price be paid for all, wherein comes the ground of ſuſpicion? Hath God taken pay for all, and doth that ſin, being committed, appear before him ſtill? And muſt he have more than Chriſt hath paid? Do not entertain ſuch baſe thoughts of him. There is not a ſin committed this day, but it was as clear before God from all eternity, with all the aggravation, as it is now; and, when God reckoned with Chriſt for the ſins of believers, he took into his conſideration the utmoſt extent of every ſin, what it would riſe unto, and took a price anſwerable to the nature and quality of them, of his Son; be they ſmall or great, be they what they will, the price was raiſed by the Father upon the back and ſcore of Chriſt, anſwerable to the tranſgreſſion.

Now, hath Chriſt paid all to the utmoſt farthing? how comes God then to put in this as an exception, as if now there were ſomething done that requires ſomething more than what Chriſt hath done, before God and you can be friends?

You will ſay peradventure, In all this will we directly ſtrike at all manner of meeting with God in humiliation and prayer, and faſting and confeſſion of ſins.

I anſwer, with the apoſtle, *Do we herein make void the law? God forbid! yea, rather, we eſtabliſh it.*

it. May not a perſon come and acknowledge his fault to his prince, after he hath received his pardon under his hand, when he is brought from the place of execution? Nay, may not he acknowledge it with melting and extreme bitterneſs of ſpirit, becauſe he knoweth he hath a pardon? It is but a ſordid and groſs conceit in the heart of men to think, that there can be no humiliation for ſin, except they be in deſpair; I ſay, that when Chriſt reveals himſelf to your ſpirits, you ſhall find your hearts more wrought upon, with ſweet meltings, relentings, and breakings of ſpirit, when you ſee your ſins pardoned, than in the moſt deſpairing condition you can be in. It hath been often taken notice of, of many malefactors, that tho' when they have come to the place of execution, their hearts, have been ſo hard, that they could not ſhed a tear; yet, when they have heard their pardon read, and ſeen themſelves out of danger, their hearts, that were ſo hard before, have melted into floods of tears: and ſo, I ſay, that heart that could not relent to ſee the filthy loathſomeneſs of ſin, while he did not ſee his pardon, yet, after the knowledge of that, melts into tears, and hath ſuch relenting, that none in the world can have, but he that knoweth it: I ſay, *The grace of God, which brings ſalvation, having appeared unto men, doth more teach them to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly, in this preſent world*, than all the arguments beſides can perſwade men, even for the glory of their God, the manifeſtation of their thankfulneſs to him, and the being fruitful unto others. We are

to walk in every way that God hath chalked out unto us; but if we think our righteouſneſs, deep humiliation, large relents of ſpirit, ſorrow for ſin, and our confeſſion thereof, muſt make our way to the bowels of Chriſt, take heed leaſt you ſet up a falſe chriſt. When you bring any thing to Chriſt, you deprive of that which is his greateſt prerogative, and give it to your faſting and humiliations; it is the prerogative of Chriſt alone to bring you to himſelf. But, you will ſay, all the promiſes of pardon run with this proviſo, in caſe men humble themſelves, and do this and that, then pardon is theirs; but otherwiſe it is none of theirs; take heed of ſuch doctrine. We have had *Arminianiſm* exceedingly exploded among us hitherto, and there hath been much complaint againſt it; but if we conceive that God, in pardoning ſin, hath an eye to confeſſion of it, here is the doing of works for pardon of ſin; and how far ſhort this comes of *Arminianiſm*, let all the world judge.

Beloved, conſider I beſeech you, doth God give grace upon obedience? What power ſhall work ſuch a diſpoſition? ſuppoſing a branch be a branch of the wild vine, that is mentioned in the prophet *Iſaiah*, ſuch a branch as there is death in it, what ſhall alter the nature of that deadneſs in it? Muſt not there be an ingrafting of it into the true vine? Muſt not the wild olive be put into the ſweet olive, before it ceaſe to be wild, and become a good branch? You muſt know, that we are all wild vines, bringing forth fruit unto death; how ſhall our qualities be changed? Muſt we be changed

changed firſt, and then, being changed, come to Chriſt? Is it not Chriſt, the vine, who, by virtue of our union to himſelf, doth change our corrupt and bad natures? Do you think, that a branch of the wild olive, muſt become a branch of the true olive before it can be put into it, and then, in regard of that, be put into it? Oh! that the order of Chriſt may be eſtabliſhed with you; namely, his beginning to cloſe with men in blood, and the power of Chriſt thus beginning with them, framing their ſpirits to himſelf, in ſuch a manner, that neither men, nor angels, nor any other creature, can frame any ſpirit for him, till he come himſelf. It is certain, *without* him *you can do nothing*; as he ſaith of himſelf, *John* xv. 5. and as the apoſtle confeſſeth of himſelf, *Rom.* vii. 18. How will you, therefore, have gracious or previous diſpoſitions and qualifications, as you call them, before Chriſt can own you; when as it muſt be Chriſt, and he given, that muſt frame theſe diſpoſitions in you? You muſt, you ſay, have eyes to ſee your folly and miſery, and be humbled in the ſenſe thereof, and hearts to cloſe with Chriſt, and then he will become yours. How contrary is this, to the Lord, by his prophet, *Iſa.* xlii. *I give thee for a covenant to the people, to open the blind eyes?* Who opens theſe blind eyes, but Chriſt, as he is given for a covenant to open them? Can men ſee either their own folly, or behold their need of him, or conceive the ſweetneſs of him, while they are ſtark blind? They are ſtark blind, till Chriſt, after he is given for a covenant, opens the eyes of

men. To think that men have their eyes opened before they come to Chriſt, whereas, when they come to him, he opens them, is to ſay, we ſee when we are blind.

You ſhall ſee, in ſcripture, that Chriſt is given ſo freely to men, that all conſiderations are taken away from them, that all diſcouragements may be taken from a ſinner, that if he come to him, and cloſe with him, if he have a heart, he may come without bar.

To conclude: If there be any willingneſs in thee to cloſe with Chriſt, ſo that fain thou wouldeſt cloſe with him if thou mighteſt; I ſay, thou may'ſt receive all the embraces of Chriſt into thy arms, and receive his kiſſes upon thy mouth, with as much boldneſs, and confidence, as any believer in the world; for it is not for their ſakes, for their amendments and reformation, their righteouſneſs or holineſs, that Chriſt hath mercy on them; but for his own ſake it is that he embraces them, and manifeſts his love unto them.

SERMON

SERMON XV.*

Our Righteouſneſs Loſs and Dung.

PHILIPPIANS iii. 8, 9.

Yea, doubtleſs, and I count all things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord, for whom I have ſuffered the loſs of all things, and count them but dung, that I may win Chriſt. And be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith.

THE main drift of this apoſtle in the whole courſe of his miniſtry, is not only to ſet out Chriſt, but alſo to ſet him alone; ſtripping man, and all things elſe, ſtark naked; leaving not a rag to cover, or a plaiſter to eaſe, or heal any jot of that univerſal leproſy over-ſpreading man; that Chriſt alone may be all in all, which through Chriſt's aſſiſtance we will endeavour to unriddle unto you; (being a riddle indeed unto too many, who think they ſee all in it with a glance) plowing with this heifer of the apoſtle, I mean the text I have read unto you. Now, that you may the more clearly ſee the whole ſcope he aims at here, you muſt well

* Here begins the Second Volume in the former editions.

well mark the coherence, how the foregoing diſcourſe leads him unto what he here aſſerts: in verſe 2. he gives warning to take heed of dogs, evil workers, and the conciſion. In verſe 3. he intimates in what regard we ſhould beware of them, namely, in not entertaining their principles, which lead to a confidence in the fleſh; and for the better eſtabliſhing or ſettling them and us in this his uſeful advice, he ſhews the vanity and ſimplicity of ſuch confidence, by comparing himſelf with the exacteſt of them, verſe 4. where he clears what he means by the fleſh, in which we ought not to have confidence, reducing it unto two heads; 1. External church-priviledges; 2. An anſwerable conformity of life according to the law; in both which, he dares challenge any of them to come near him, eſpecially in the latter branch of the fleſh; where note, that he as well calls his zeal and blameleſneſs touching the righteouſneſs which is in the law, the fleſh, as the other, wherein if there were any cauſe of confiding, he had more than any of them, verſe 4. I ſay, as well that as his being a circumciſed *Jew*, and a Phariſee. Now in verſe 7. he intimates indeed that he was once of their mind; to account thoſe things (which he now finds to be but fleſh) gain; but for his part, whatever they were in his eye before, he ſees and ſo counts them but loſs for Chriſt. In the words of my text he handles this his laſt aſſertion more fully, wherein he propoſes his own happy diſcovery and invaluable ſucceſs, as a pattern and encouragement for us to follow him. *Firſt*,

He

He demoliſhes and throws away all the glittering, but yet rotten materials, wherewith he had, and others ſtill do erect a fortreſs of ſecurity, and palace of delight; then he declares the end of his rejecting thoſe materials, ſo much hiſſed at, not only by the world, but even by many devout ones alſo; namely, that he might lay a ſure foundation, and build an impregnable tower that cannot be ſhaken; like a wiſe maſter-builder, who finding that he hath built upon the ſand, with hay and ſtubble, pulls down all, and caſts it on the dung-hill, and then finds a rock, and rears a ſtructure with tried ſtones from it, which will not moulder with weather-beating; ſo that he doth not only exhibit Chriſt with his righteouſneſs, as the ſecureſt city of refuge, but alſo ſhews plainly, that all muſt down to the ground and be loſt, and then begin a-new with him only; one old rotten poſt left, will cauſe all the new building to ſink.

Concerning the firſt buſineſs of pulling down the old houſe, obſerve, 1. What materials they are which he ruinates; the apoſtle expreſſeth this in theſe general terms, [*all things*,] now theſe things have a reference to thoſe materials mentioned before, namely, his church-priviledges and legal blameleſneſs; but yet he ſpeaks more largely here, than only of thoſe; his meaning is, that he did not only caſt away as dung, what he was or could do before he received Chriſt, but even all things whatever alſo he hath been able to do ſince he received him, though aſſiſted thereunto by his Spirit, as *Beza* well obſerves on this place.

place. 2. Note, what he doth with theſe materials; he doth not glaze them, and let them ſtand, nor pull them down and poliſh them, and then patch up a new building with old materials; no, nor yet cull out the choiceſt of thoſe his glittering works, to mingle them with Chriſt's, but throws all, even every jot away; he ſees no worth in any, no not the beſt; nay, more, he ſees the very beſt ſo far from ſervice, or profit, that indeed he confeſſes all is loſs to him; he means more than that he muſt loſe all his coſt and labour thereabout; but muſt alſo be a great loſer himſelf thereby: nay, he goes further, and tells us, that all his works are no better materials for his ſpiritual building, than as if a man ſhould build a houſe, and uſe no other materials, than the filth of a jakes, or dung, though his works be blameleſs; for thus he ſaith, I count them but dung, and ſo he caſts them all on a dunghill; that he means his own blameleſs works, which he thus looks on as loſs and dung, is moſt plain by that other expreſſion of his, *Not having mine own righteouſneſs which is of the law.*

As concerning the apoſtle's end of thus ſtripping himſelf naked, and caſting away his own, though ſpecious works, in general, it is to be cloathed with white robes, even the garments of ſalvation; but more eſpecially he declares his ends to be, 1. The excellency of the knowledge, or the knowledge of the excellency of Chriſt; (for the knowledge itſelf hath no excellency but in reference to him known) as if he ſhould ſay, I could never come

to

to know how excellent Chriſt Jeſus the Lord is, till all I was and am, plainly appear to be loſs and dung; my own righteouſneſs was a thick film over my eyes, that I could not ſee Chriſt's worth. 2. Another end was ſomething more, namely, a gaining, or winning of Chriſt, (ἵνα χριστὸν κερδήσω) importing, that as long as his obedience was in requeſt with him, and ſeemed any thing better than dung in his eye, he could never get Chriſt. 3. An end yet a little higher; the latter aimed at the preſent, this laſt at the future; namely, that he might be found (that is at the great day of appearance) in him; as if he ſhould ſay, my works being but dung, will give an ill ſavour at the laſt, and therefore I muſt caſt them away, that I may be found in Chriſt, who is all and only ſweetneſs; if my obedience come near, it will change the ſcent, and mar all: that this is the meaning is plain, by his own expounding of himſelf in the following words, *(Not having mine own righteouſneſs*, &c.) from all which obſerve we,

I. That all things, yea even the moſt blameleſs walking according to God's law, not only before, but after converſion, or receiving Chriſt, are truly counted loſs and dung in a *Paul*'s eye, and ſuch a one will be willing to ſuffer the loſs thereof, as of dung.

II. Then, and not till then, a perſon attains to the knowledge of the excellency of Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, gains him, is *found in him* (or ſo minded as is expreſſed in the former doctrine) *not having his own righteouſneſs, but the righteouſneſs of God which is by faith in Chriſt.* I begin

I begin with the firſt; and, becauſe, at firſt ſight, peradventure, to ſome, it may poſſibly ſeem harſh, pray mark how clearly and fully every tittle of it is founded on the text. *Firſt*, Obſerve how the apoſtle ſaith expreſsly, that he therefore *counts all loſs and dung* that he may attain thoſe excellencies mentioned; what need that, if he might attain theſe without ſuch an eſtimation? Again, obſerve the generality of this expreſſion, *All things*, which is more than the particulars mentioned; and further, note the time when he ſpake this, it was certainly after his converſion to Chriſt, *Phil.* i. 13. for he had been in bonds for him before this: now, that which he here ſpeaks of their loſs and filthineſs, is in the preſent tenſe; he delivers his mind of them as viewed at that inſtant; and, in ſpecial, mentions his own righteouſneſs as part of that dung he would not be found in; and, whereas it might be objected, that he had not now received Chriſt as yet, becauſe this he did to gain him; it is moſt plain he was in him already, by what he ſaid before; beſides, nothing is clearer than that he was converted immediately before he received and entered into his apoſtleſhip, as is plain, in *Acts* ix. 2, 3. his meaning here muſt needs be of fuller degrees of participation of Chriſt. The prophet *Iſaiah*, ſuch another evangelic man as *Paul*, comes nothing ſhort of him, in ſpeaking of his own righteouſneſs, and other ſervants of God, ſaying, *But we are all as an unclean thing*, (he means a jakes) *all our righteouſneſs are as filthy rags, or as a menſtrous cloth*,

cloth, Iſa. lxiv. 6. he makes himſelf one of this number. Our bleſſed Saviour, who well knew what was in man, bids us, when we have done all things which are commanded us, ſay, *We are unprofitable ſervants*, Luke xvii. 10.

For the better clearing of this truth, let us conſider, 1. What it is to count all things as loſs and dung. 2. What it is to ſuffer the loſs of all things. 3. How it may appear that all things, even the moſt blameleſs works, are but loſs and dung in a renewed eſtate, and in what reſpect they are ſo.

1. This word [*count*] hath two different ſignifications; ſometimes an opinion falſly grounded, as in that ſaying of the apoſtle, *We are counted the offſcouring of the world*; ſometimes (as here) a certain determination infallibly grounded; thus doth a *Paul*'s eye determine, (I mean a perſon like-minded with him, and right-ſighted as he.) Now this determination, or eſtimation of things as loſs and dung, is not of ſome only, but of all. Many will not ſtick to count thoſe things, that are directly againſt any precept, to be loſs and dung; but this ſentence muſt paſs further, even to all civility, morality, yea, and the moſt exact obedience to any or all the precepts of the law; (if it be poſſible) when ſuch obedience hath had the moſt aſſiſtance of the Spirit, the beſt aim at the right end, done after the moſt enlarged manner, with all other good circumſtances, to the utmoſt height a creature can here mount unto; all theſe things, or whatever elſe, the pureſt ſanctified ſearcher

ſearcher upon earth (being meer man) can bolt forth from his heart, muſt be counted but as *loſs and dung*; otherwiſe, a *Paul* cannot ſay, I count *all things* ſo, if any one thing may be excepted.

But let me not be miſtaken here, I do not ſay, that the motions themſelves of the Spirit, or the enlargement of the heart as his, or the ends aimed at as preſcribed, muſt be thus counted; but the whole work as, and when, done by a ſanctified perſon, tho' ſo aſſiſted by the Spirit; when ſuch a man looks on the work ſo done by him, he muſt ſee nothing but meer *loſs and dung*. I hope your patience will ſtay your thoughts and reaſonings, till I can come to ſhew for what reſpects it muſt be ſo.

In the mean time let us conſider, what it is to count them *loſs and dung*. It is worth your obſervation, that the apoſtle doth not ſay *loſs* only; for, then, a man were in no worſe caſe but to have his labour for his pains, (as the proverb is) that is, he ſhould only loſe his pains, or the work he is about; but, he ſaith *loſs*, that is, by the beſt work that ever a meer man did, he himſelf is a great loſer; I mean, that he forfeits life and bliſs thereby on earth, and in heaven alſo; there is ſin enough in it, (if God had nothing elſe but what he can pick out of the beſt work) to lay to his charge, to forfeit all and more, even to caſt him into utter darkneſs; I ſpeak in regard of the deſert of ſuch a work in itſelf conſidered; under the notion of ſuch loſs muſt we look on, and account all things; and not only as loſs, but as dung alſo, which comprehends the cauſality of this loſs in ſuch

ſuch works. Dung, you know, is one of the filthieſt and loathſomeſt things in the world, cauſing offence to thoſe eſpecially in whoſe face it is caſt. All things of ours, even the beſt, are of this nature, nay infinitely worſe, (for no created natural filth can ſufficiently ſymbolize with ſpiritual;) I ſay, therefore, that all our righteouſneſs, at beſt, is ſuch a menſtrous cloth in God's eye, and ſo certainly in itſelf; there is dung caſt in his face, even in *new moons, and ſabbaths, and ſolemn aſſemblies*; ſo that his ſoul hates them, they are a burthen to him, he cannot away with them; they ſend up an ill ſavour into his noſtrils, ſmelling rankly of the fleſh when they proceed from the pureſt heart; there being ſome fleſh luſting againſt the ſpirit ſtill; as, namely, ſome ſpiritual, or rather carnal pride, and ſelf-ſtroaking, when a man hath done very well as he thinks; which dung is the promeriting cauſe of the loſs before-mentioned, accompanying all things of ours, even the beſt, which is the infallible ground-work for counting them ſuch.

2. Let us now conſider, what it is to ſuffer this loſs of all things. For clearing hereof note, that there is a double ſuffering loſs of a thing. 1. Paſſive. 2. Active. Or, 1. Violent. 2. Voluntary. A paſſive ſuffering of the loſs of any thing, is, when one is violently bereft of it thro' an overmatch; as when a man ſuffers the loſs of his goods by thieves breaking in upon him, and overcoming him: thus ſhall all unbelievers ſuffer the loſs of all things, even their good deeds as they call them, prayers, alms, &c. They ſhall indeed come to Chriſt, and ſay, *Lord, have we not done this, and*

this, in thy name, Matt. vii. 22, 23. But their lamb-ſkins in which they walked, ſhall be pulled over their ears, and Chriſt ſhall ſay, *Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I know you not.* But this is not the apoſtle's ſuffering loſs, it is an active or voluntary ſuffering; bear with the terms tho' they ſeem contradictory: our Saviour ſpeaks to this effect to *John the Baptiſt*, over modeſtly refuſing to baptize him, *Suffer it to be ſo now*, that is, give way to it; ſo here the apoſtle's ſuffering loſs was a contented giving way to the loſs of all he was and did. Loſs, here, hath not ſo much reference to his perſon, as the things he did; tho' in ſome reſpect, it may be underſtood of his perſon, thus; that he was contented to take ſhame, and even confuſion of face to himſelf, for his beſt actions, and account himſelf worthy to be deſtroyed, and be his own judge, to paſs not only the ſentence of confiſcation of all that he hath, but alſo of condemnation on his perſon, crying out, ταλαί πωρ© ἐγωάνθρωπος, *Oh! wretched man that I am!* And, beſides this voluntary ſuffering ſuch perſonal loſs, he is willing to be ſtript naked of all things, and all pleas they can afford him; ſo as not to have a word to ſpeak for himſelf, except it be in impleading all that ever he had done, as making far more againſt, than for him; ſuch, I take it, is ſuffering the loſs of all things.

3. I come to the next thing propoſed, How it may appear that all things, even the moſt blameleſs works, and that after renovation, are but loſs and dung, and in what reſpect they are ſo. Unto ingenuous ſpirits, a man would think that the text,

text, and other ſcriptures mentioned, might be ſufficiently ſatisfactory; but for better illuſtration ſake, you muſt firſt diſtinguiſh (as I touched before) between that which is the Spirit's in works after renovation, and the whole work after we have done it; and know, that tho' the motions and aſſiſtance of the Spirit, be pure, holy, and without ſcum in the ſpring, to wit, itſelf; yet, by that time theſe motions and aſſiſtance have paſſed through the channels of our hearts, and been mixed with our manifold corruptions in doing, even the whole work thereby becomes polluted and filthy [a]; our filthineſs alters the property of the pure motions of Chriſt's Spirit: let not this ſound harſh, for it is no paradox that a man ſhould defile holy things; you may know that received principle, that one circumſtance amiſs, mars a good action, and makes it all naught. St. *James* tells

 us,

[a] This is a paſſage excepted to by D. W. in his *Goſpel-Truth ſtated, &c.* p. 196. it is ſadly perverted by him, on which he charges the Dr. with ſaying, "That the greateſt holineſs in believers, though wrought in them by the Holy Ghoſt, is mere dung, rottenneſs and filthineſs, as in them:" whereas the Dr. is not ſpeaking of internal ſanctification of the Spirit on the heart, which is a pure work, and *is all glorious within*; nor can it be mixed with, or be defiled by, our corruptions; but of works done after regeneration, even at the motion, and by the aſſiſtance of the Spirit of God; which motions paſſing through the channel of our corrupt hearts, ceaſe to be the Spirit's, and become ours, and mingled with our corruptions are polluted; and ſo the works performed are as dung, and ſo to be accounted, and not to be gloried or truſted in: and yet, notwithſtanding all this, the Dr. obſerves, they ought to be carefully maintained being profitable to men; yea, that through faith in Chriſt the dung is extracted, and being purged by him, become acceptable unto God, though not till they are renounced by us, and counted loſs and dung; nay, he affirms, that the motions of the Spirit themſelves, the enlargement of the heart, and right aims in working, are not to be ſo accounted, but the works themſelves.

us, that *whoſoever fulfills* (or whoſoever ſhall keep) *the whole law of God, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all*; his meaning, I take it, is this, that the leaſt drop of our poiſon, in the leaſt failing, hath ſuch a diffuſive venom, that it poiſons all the good, and overſpreads its filth thro' the whole, even as one drop of poiſon, injected into the rareſt cordial, makes the whole, and every drop of it, mortal: ſo, that except the beſt of all our works can paſs thro' us without the leaſt mixture of any defect or pollution of ours, it cannot but be dung. Pour the cleaneſt water that is into a dunghill, and let it but run thro' it, and, when paſſed thro', what is it but dung itſelf? The Lord requiring ſacrifices of the *Jews*, enjoyns a male without blemiſh; tho' a male, yet with one blemiſh, the whole ſacrifice was abominable, and not that one blemiſh only. And whereas it may ſeem harſh, that even what is the Spirit's, muſt be involved in a man's own, under the general notion of dung; know, that it once being mixt with our filth, ceaſeth to be his, and becomes ours; it was his when injected, but our fleſh, being like the viper's ſtomach, that turns the wholſomeſt food into poiſon; or like an ulcerous tumor, that turns the ſoundeſt fleſh, drawn thereto, into rottenneſs; and ſome of this ulcerous fleſh remains in the beſt ſaints on earth, and mingles itſelf in the beſt ſervice, and ſo turns the whole into its own nature; for *(omne generans ſibi ſimile generat)* that being dung, all that it diffuſeth itſelf into, muſt needs be like it; even as the gourds gathered from the wild vine, being mortal themſelves, and put into the pot, ſet on for the ſons of

the

the prophets, made the whole pottage deadly, 2 *Kings* iv. 39, 40. The apoſtle *Paul* complains, that even when he would do good, evil was preſent with him, thro' the law, in his members, rebelling againſt the law of his mind, which makes him cry out of himſelf bitterly, againſt all he did: *Oh! wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death?* Rom. vii. 21,---23, 24. By which he muſt needs mean all together, becauſe he doth not fly to good works as a refuge againſt the evil, but to Chriſt alone as a refuge againſt all: *I thank God* (ſaith he) *through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*, ver. 25. So then, in reſpect of the inſeparable communicative poiſon of the ingredients of our corruptions, mingling themſelves with the beſt righteouſneſs of the beſt men, both they and that are but loſs and dung, and filthy rags, and muſt be ſo accounted.

Some then may object, if it be ſo, we ought to refrain from doing righteouſneſs, as from dung.

I anſwer, It follows not; but that we muſt refrain from glorying in, or ſtroaking ourſelves for our righteous doings, and rather take ſhame to ourſelves when we have done, and ſo glory only in the Lord. Though good works done by us are but dung in themſelves, and in God's eye; yet muſt we be careful to maintain them ſince they are profitable to men, *Tit.* iii. 8. *David* (*Pſal.* xvi. 2, 3.) confeſſeth, that his goodneſs extendeth not to God; yet for all this he refrains not, becauſe it could extend to the ſaints upon earth, and to the excellent in whom was his delight; it is no good plea, that becauſe a man cannot be wholly clean, therefore, he will be more

filthy than needs: you will not like it, that becauſe your children cannot come from ſchool without ſome dirt, in the cleaneſt way, that therefore they ſhall wallow like ſwine over head and ears in it.

Others will ſay, That God often ſhews his approbation of good works, which he would not do if they were all dung.

I anſwer, That whatſoever is not of faith is ſin; but, as to the believer, all things are clean, ſo through this faith in Chriſt, the whole filth of our works is extracted by him; and he preſenting the ſame purged by himſelf alone, they become accepted with God, *Rev.* viii. 3, 4. but ſimply the works themſelves as done, though never ſo well, are abhorred of God; and Chriſt never takes them to purge them, till we ourſelves wholly renounce them by counting them loſs and dung; and that acceptance procured by him, imports only a liking God takes to them, no efficacy at all they have with him. So you have the doctrine ſufficiently cleared to you, I hope.

Now, If it be ſo as you have heard, then (keeping within the bounds of *Paul* to *Timothy*, *Not to rebuke an elder, but to entreat him as a father:*) let me have leave, who alſo am an elder, though unworthy, to beſeech the elders with all poſſible meekneſs, that they will not magnify man's righteouſneſs, no not when he is in Chriſt, above what is meet; let me obtain the favour to declare my judgment, when ſuch righteouſneſs of man is ſo exalted, and the iſſue of it: it is exalted above what is meet, when high things are ſpoken of it in its own name, and even in reference to Chriſt's aſſiſtance, and a man's being in him.

him. 1. When it is cried up with rhetorical commendation, aſcribing virtue and efficacy to it in its own name: give me leave, I beſeech you, whilſt I open myſelf in this particular; man's works are thus cried up and magnified, when (for inſtance) his prayer, repentance, ſelf-denial, and exact blameleſs walking, have the high titles of a kind of omnipotency to effect wonders, and are commended as moſt precious and incomparably excellent, not only in the eye of men, but God; as the things wherein he takes infinite pleaſure, proceeding from a ſanctified heart; and this whilſt there is no name mentioned, but only of theſe righteous actions in ſuch high praiſes, as if they carried ſuch a luſtre, beauty, and energetical virtue in their own nature: you know the poet's complaint, *Hos ego verſiculos feci, tulit alter honores; ſic vos non vobis:* may not Chriſt juſtly take up ſuch a complaint? All the comelineſs of man's righteouſneſs, is no more but what he puts upon it, and yet the righteouſneſs muſt go, he not ſo much as mentioned or hinted in ſuch praiſe: there is verily a fault among us in this reſpect; if any ſay, that Chriſt is always to be ſuppoſed as principal; I anſwer, he ſhould be ſuppoſed not only as the principal in theſe praiſes, but as ſolely deſerving; for all that is praiſe-worthy is his alone; but why only ſuppoſed? Why deſerves not he to be named as well as the righteouſneſs? Certainly it is no good manners (to ſay no worſe) to forget him, whilſt his pooreſt inſtruments are ſo highly remembered; beſides, how can people ſuppoſe that at which they hear not of? they muſt go away, with things, as they are delivered to them; when

ſervants bring preſents from their maſters to any, they do not ſay, I beſtow ſuch or ſuch a thing on you, but, my maſter ſends it you; if he ſhould take it on himſelf, he would go for an arrogant fellow; it will not ſalve the matter, when he is taxed for ſuch arrogancy, to ſay, my maſter ſhould have been ſuppoſed, when he gave no hint of him. Such kind of extolling man's righteouſneſs is far from counting it loſs and dung, as *Paul* doth in my text; methinks, therefore, it were comely in all extolling of it, explicitly to aſcribe all the praiſe to the glory of the grace of Chriſt.

2. Man's righteouſneſs is exalted above what is meet, when too high things are ſpoken of it, being accompanied with Chriſt's aſſiſtance by his Spirit, and in reference to a man's being in him, when he doth ſuch righteouſneſs.

May I be bold once more to clear my mind in this alſo: it is true indeed, whilſt a believer's heart is over-caſt with groſs vapours, and is more than ordinary dull in hearing, is low and ſlow in praying, and is ſomewhat ſtiff in faſting above meaſure; ſuch righteouſneſs goes uſually for loſs and dung, and ſuch it is; but if a ſoul gets under full ſail, filled with a gale of the Spirit of Chriſt, when floods of meltings flow from it; if he can cry mightily, be ſwift to hear, greedy in ſucking in divine truths, and ſomewhat exact in obſerving practical righteous means, to mourn and pray luſtily, being helped by the Spirit herein; then ſuch prayers, mournings, and other divine exerciſes will do wonders; hereby men ſhall get pardon, ſettle ſpiritual, civil, and natural healings, with national: ſuch courſes ſome think will turn away God's

God's wrath, and reconcile him to men; but, under favour, the attributing ſuch efficacy to righteouſneſs, though thus aſſiſted by Chriſt's Spirit, is more than is meet, though Chriſt be explicitly owned as the author of ſuch aſſiſtance; the righteouſneſs ſo aſſiſted, hath no efficacy at all to obtain any thing of the Lord, but rather to haſten and multiply wrath, in that it multiplies ſin [b]. How can ſin have efficacy towards expiation of ſin, and pacifying a juſt incenſed God for it? certainly in no reſpect: ſuppoſe a traitor brought in to the prince by a favourite, and taught by him what to ſay, and how to deport himſelf; but the traitor mars his tale, and as he delivers it, it proves new treaſon; can the favourite's aſſiſtance be any ground to hope that this, his new traitorous carriage, ſhall pacify the king, and obtain his pardon? The caſe is like ours in hand: when we come to God, the Spirit perhaps puts a good tale into our mouth, but through our ill managing of it, we make but new treaſon of it; the righteouſneſs with which we come to God, though we bring with it the clean water of the Spirit of Chriſt, to waſh away our old dung; yet there is ſuch filth in the veſſel of our preſent righteous actions, that they do but add dung to dung, inſtead of waſhing it away.

If any ſhall grant, that originally, or *per ſe*, the beſt righteouſneſs obtains nothing, but rather charges

[b] That is, when it is over-valued, and not renounced, as it ſhould; but ſuch efficacy aſcribed to it, as is not in it, as to turn away the wrath of God, and obtain favour of him, to the great neglect of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; otherwiſe the Dr. owns, it inſtrumentally obtains good things from and through Chriſt the fountain, and as it has relation to him.

charges man with a new account; but yet inſtrumentally, it obtains what is deſired, being well qualified as before is mentioned.

I anſwer, If it be no more, then I heartily deſire that we ſhould always expreſs it, that the people may clearly underſtand and remember, and be guided explicitly to the fountain itſelf, Chriſt alone: for certainly whilſt he is ſuppreſſed, and theſe inſtruments are reached out without relation to him, who only fills them with all that runs through them, they are but meer empty pits, and dry channels, though never ſo curiouſly cut out.

The iſſue of ſuch over-exalting ſanctified righteouſneſs, is, 1. That by ſuch doating on the efficacy of it, Chriſt himſelf is ſhamefully neglected, and grows too much out of requeſt: here may I a little alter the ſaying, which hiſtorians tell us was heard from heaven, after the church grew into credit; *Religio peperit divitias, & filia devoravit matrem*; I may as truly ſay, *Chriſtus peperit juſtitiam, & filia devoravit matrem*; Chriſt begets righteouſneſs in men, and this exalted as much as in ſuch lies that over-exalt it, is made to devour Chriſt himſelf: juſt as if a king ſhould promote a favourite, and then he ſhould be ſo applauded for his uſefulneſs to the ſubjects, that the king muſt be dethroned, and he crowned in his place. I beſeech you, do but mark how our righteouſneſs, ſo exalted, creeps up by degrees into Chriſt's throne, even to the dethroning of him.

In all exigencies and extremities, how naked is the throne of grace (underſtanding grace properly) left without ſuitors! how few followers hath Chriſt himſelf! how rarely are men ſent to ſhelter themſelves under the ſhadow of his wings, whilſt

whilſt the ſeat of righteouſneſs is throng'd! what earneſt out-cries for prayers, mournings, faſtings, and ſuch like, to help men at a dead lift! what poſting to them in extremities, as if they kept a court by themſelves! for Chriſt is ſeldom heard of, at leaſt not ſet up on high as to do all; and yet this righteouſneſs is but merely his miniſtring ſervant: what the apoſtle ſaid of himſelf, (1 *Cor.* iii. 5.) I may as truly ſay of the beſt righteouſneſs beſt aſſiſted; what is prayer, mourning, faſting, hearing, or the like, but miniſters by whom ye believed and received mercy? and if but miniſters at beſt, ſhall they be greater than the Lord? Let me not be miſtaken, I intend no derogation to righteouſneſs, but to bring it into its own place; namely, to be uſed as that, where, according to Chriſt's direction we may meet with him; from whoſe hands alone, we are there to expect whatever we pant after according to his will; reſerving a ſubmiſſion to be diſpoſed of otherwiſe, if he ſee fit.

2. Another iſſue of ſuch exalting man's ſanctified righteouſneſs above what is meet, is Chriſt's leaving perſons to that little, or no ſuccour, which this can yield, being made the refuge of men.

I remember what the Lord ſaid to his people, the *Iſraelites*, bowed down under the hands of the *Philiſtines*; *Go, and cry unto the gods which ye have choſen, let them deliver you in the time of your trouble*, Judg. x. 24. what is it but to make a God of our righteouſneſs, when we chooſe it to be our refuge in time of need, and then exclude, or take no notice of Chriſt? *We aſk and receive not, becauſe we aſk amiſs*; building on fervency in prayer to obtain of God, when we ſhould reſt only on

on Chriſt, without regard to that: doubtleſs all this faſting, mourning, and praying in theſe times, which I believe no former age could parallell, proſper not ſo well as is expected, becauſe the principal verb is wanting, which can only make good ſenſe of all we ſay or do, Chriſt I mean. Were all ſeaſoned with that ſalt, doubtleſs it would be more ſavoury, that is, cordially and dependingly ſeaſoned with it: *Except you believe*, (ſaith the prophet) *you ſhall not be eſtabliſhed.* Wherefore are we called chriſtians? Is not that a true axiom, *Denominatio eſt a principaliore?* The name imports that all in us ſhould mainly ſavour of Chriſt; and that no receipt ſhould be made or given, but Chriſt muſt be predominant in it: ſure I am, *Paul* was of this mind, when he ſaid, *I deſire to know nothing among you, ſave Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified.* How can that phyſic work according to expectation, which by the apothecary's heedleſsneſs is deſtitute of that ingredient which was preſcribed to do all in all? it is as if *Hellebore* ſhould be left out of a purge, and nothing ſhould be adminiſtered but what was preſcribed for the taking of it down: Chriſt only is the *Hellebore* that purgeth; prayers are but the liquor to let him down; leave Chriſt out, and what will all the reſt do? Nay, the truth is, as in every ſtrong purge, there are ſome degrees of poiſon, which are quelled by a predominant cordial injected for that purpoſe; ſo our mournings, faſtings, and ſelf-denials, have poiſon in them, ſufficient to ſuffocate a ſoul that takes them, and Chriſt alone is the cordial that quells ſuch poiſon; let him then be left out, and judge I pray you what will be the iſſue. O, then, whatever elſe we forget in preſcribing

preſcribing and applying receipts for our ſpiritual recoveries, let us be ſure not to forget to put Chriſt into them, leſt we kill inſtead of healing, or poiſon men inſtead of recovering them.

And for the generality of God's people, my advice to them is briefly this; when Chriſt is preſcribed in greateſt quantity, and for ſole efficacy, let them beware, leſt they forget or neglect to put him into their receipts; the portion is deſperate where he is not predominant: and if at any time a ſpiritual phyſician preſcribe any receipt, and forgets Chriſt therein, let them be ſure to ſupply him themſelves before they take it, though the ingredients preſcribed ſeem never ſo rich and ſovereign; and reſolve that theſe of themſelves have too much poiſon in them to be ventured on alone, and therefore will produce but loſs, being dung.

The premiſes conſidered, I beſeech you all, ſuffer a word of exhortation, take ſome good courſe to get a *Paul*'s eye, clearly to ſee loſs and dung in your beſt righteouſneſs, even when your ſails are fulleſt, and your flight ſwifteſt. What courſe muſt we take (will you ſay) to get ſuch an eye to ſee all things thus? 1. Take heed you uſe not falſe ſpectacles whilſt you look on your righteouſneſs; look not thro' men's eſtimation or applauſe of it, who uſe to be ſomething over-rhetorical in their praiſes. 2. Look not thro' your own deceitful hearts, which are apt to judge their own brood very fair. 3. Nor thro' other men's righteouſneſs, comparing your own with theirs, whoſe copies, at the beſt, are imperfect, and, therefore, cannot fully repreſent righteouſneſs in its compleat form; but weigh it impartially in the

the ballance of the ſanctuary; try it by the authentic ſtandard; in brief, lay it to the pattern given in the mount. *Paul* ſaith of himſelf, *I was alive without the law once*, (that is, I thought all was right and well, 'till I came to the law) *but when the commandment came, ſin revived, and I died*, Rom. vii. 9. that is, this commandment ſhewed me a world of filth I dreamed not of, by which I ſaw I was a dead man. But, beloved, I confeſs in all this I have but ſet a clear chryſtal glaſs before a blind eye; the law is but materially the diſcoverer of loſs and dung in our beſt righteouſneſs, containing in it the rules of it, and the aberrations from it, which is a book ſealed up and illegible in reſpect of the ſpiritualneſs of it; and, therefore, the ſole efficient of diſcerning loſs and dung in our righteouſneſs, is only that *Lamb who only was found worthy to open the book and unſeal it*, Rev. v. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. Chriſt alone can make a perſon ſee it; and, therefore, the Lord ſaith, (in *Iſa.* lxii. 6.) *I will give thee for a covenant to the people, to open the blind eyes.* Chriſt repreſents our beſt righteouſneſs, as loſs and dung, two ways:

1. Directly, thus; not only ſhewing us plainly the particulars wherein the filth conſiſts, which he doth by the law; but alſo by giving a right hint of it therein, whereby ſin appears clearly to be out of meaſure ſinful; this he doth by the touch of his omnipotency; this ſight of failings in our righteouſneſs, not only as failings, but alſo under the notion of dung, indeed is the ſole work of Chriſt; not all the means in the world can do it; he, indeed, in the miniſtry of the goſpel, doth it here and there; therefore, the apoſtle *Paul*, (ſpeaking of turning men from darkneſs to light by the preaching

preaching of the goſpel) adds, that Chriſt had ſent him to do it. And, therefore, as *Peter* and *John*, after they had healed the lame man, ſeeing the people begin to gaze on them, tell them that they were miſtaken, *It was Chriſt's name, through faith in him, that made him whole*, Acts iii. 12,---16. So ſhould all miniſters and people, when they attain to a clear ſight and ſenſe of dung in the beſt actions, confeſs that it is only his name that did it, by a ſole abſolute power he hath over the hearts of men.

2. Chriſt gives ſuch clear ſight reflexly; I mean comparatively, thus, by ſhewing that the ſole all-fulneſs is in himſelf; from whence he makes a man argue thus, If all purity be in Chriſt, then is there none elſewhere in the creature.

SERMON XVI.

The two Covenants of Grace.

HEBREWS viii. 6.

But now hath he obtained a more excellent miniſtry, by how much he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was eſtabliſhed upon better promiſes.

THIS epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, as it notably illuſtrates and invincibly maintains the tranſcendent excellencies of Chriſt; ſo the apoſtle (that he might the more prevalently win the *Jews*) carries the whole diſcourſe

courſe of Chriſt in the way they were beſt acquainted with; comparing him, all along, to ſuch things as were uſual among them, and were in greateſt requeſt and of higheſt eſteem with them; as firſt he compares him to angels, then to *Moſes*, and ſo goes along. Now, becauſe he knew that the prieſthood among the *Jews*, and the privileges belonging to it were their oracle and chiefeſt refuge in caſes of greateſt moment and conſequence; he mainly ſets himſelf about this, to ſhew the incomparable excellency of Chriſt's perſonal prieſthood above the moſt glorious excellencies the prieſthood of the *Jews* had.

It is very true, as it ſhall appear by-and-by, that the things of greateſt moment were wrapt up in the privileges of their prieſthood; there they had their remiſſion of ſins, their peace of conſcience, their immunities and ſecurity from danger, ſuch as it was; ſo that if the apoſtle could but make it good, that there was more excellency to be found in Chriſt, than in their greateſt privileges, there was great hope that he might be a miniſter of reconciliation to them; and, for this cauſe, you ſhall find, beloved, that he ſpends four whole chapters about nothing elſe but to ſhew what tranſcendent excellencies were to be had from Chriſt himſelf, above the greateſt privileges this moſt glorious ordinance of theirs could bring unto them. The 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th chapters of this epiſtle contain a compariſon between Chriſt and the privileges his prieſtly office brings, with thoſe prieſts, and the privileges their offices brought; and, in the compariſon, moſt clearly ſhew an unſearchable difference between the beſt of theirs, and

thoſe

thoſe Chriſt brings, which were not before in the adminiſtration of their prieſthood.

And, however, for the preſent, a diſcourſe on this ſubject may ſeem impertinent, I doubt not, beloved, but, before I have done, I ſhall make it appear, that it is of the greateſt conſequence to the true members of Chriſt as any that can be delivered. I ſhall endeavour, all the way as I go along, to make ſure work, that I may not leave occaſion of diſpute or contradiction.

In chap. vii. the apoſtle begins with the order of Chriſt's prieſthood, to ſhew the excellencies of that above the order of their prieſthood; he was a prieſt after the order of *Melchizedeck*, they after the order of *Aaron*. In chap. viii. ix. and x. he paſſeth from the order, and comes to the buſineſs whereabout their ſeveral offices were employed; and, concerning their ſeveral employments, he finds ſo large a difference, that altho' it be true, there was ſome remiſſion of ſins, ſome peace of conſcience, in the adminiſtration of their prieſtly office; yet, ſo far the glory of Chriſt's office goes beyond theirs, that he ſticks not to call their ſervice and adminiſtration, when it was at the beſt, but the very ſhadow of Chriſt's; that he doth in the words before my text, and alſo in chap. x. 1. Nay, he goes further, he finds ſo great a difference between them, that he doth not ſtick to make the buſineſs of thoſe prieſts, and of Chriſt, two diſtinct covenants, one to ſucceed in the room of the other. Tho' Chriſt be the ſubject-matter, in general, of both, and remiſſion of ſins the fruit of both, yet, ſuch a vaſt difference is between them, that he makes them two ſeveral covenants: and the con-

ſequence of this truth is of ſo much moment, that, untill there be a right underſtanding of it, there will never be any abſolute ſettlement of peace of conſcience; but there will ſtill ariſe ſome objections to charge ſin upon the ſoul, which it ſhall never be able to anſwer.

To come to the words of my text, they are the ſum of the whole diſcourſe thro' all thoſe four chapters; here the apoſtle begins to make his application of the compariſon. Before he had ſhewed what was the employment of thoſe prieſts of the old law; now he comes to ſhew wherein Chriſt excells them; *But now he hath obtained a more excellent miniſtry*, &c.

There are three things conſiderable in the words:

I. The apoſtle's main concluſion.

II. His application and illuſtration of it. And,

III. His confirmation of the truth of it.

1. The main concluſion, in theſe words, *But now he hath obtained a more excellent miniſtry*; wherein there are theſe particulars very conſiderable: 1. The apoſtle limits the office of Chriſt, what it is, he calls it a miniſtry. 2. He ſhews the quality of this office; for, tho' the term miniſtry may ſeem to be ſomewhat coarſe and low for ſuch a one as Chriſt, yet, he ſhews, it is not ſordid or mean, but an excellent miniſtry. 3. He proceeds to the degree of excellency of it, and that by comparing it with the miniſtry of the prieſts of the old law; it is *a more excellent miniſtry*, that is, than theirs. 4. He ſhews how Chriſt comes by this miniſtry, *He hath obtained* it; and, chap. vii. it is more fully expreſſed; he was made a prieſt by an oath; he was called thereunto by God. 5. Finally, he ſets out the time of Chriſt's exerciſing this

this miniſtry of his, when it began to be on foot: *But now hath he obtained*; intimating, that it is ſuch a one as comes in the place of the other, and begins when that ends.

2. The illuſtration of this concluſion is in the next words: *By how much he is the mediator of a better covenant*; where you ſhall find the apoſtle explaining and opening his concluſion in theſe particular branches. 1. He explains what the miniſtry is, he ſpeaks of; he calls it a mediatorſhip; he is a miniſter, that is, he is a mediator. 2. He further explains this miniſtry, by ſetting forth the ſubject-matter about which it is employed, he is the mediator of a covenant. 3. He explains wherein this mediatorſhip of Chriſt excells that of the old prieſts; for he ſaid before only, it is more excellent; here he ſhews wherein it is, namely, *By how much he is the mediator of a better covenant.* 4. He intimates to us that there is a diſtinct covenant, whereof Chriſt is the mediator, differing from that, whereof the prieſt was the mediator: he doth not ſay, he is the mediator of better things in the ſame covenant, but of a better covenant: a better and a worſe covenant muſt be two ſeveral covenants; better and worſe qualities may be in one and the ſame; but for the covenant itſelf to be called better than another, is a manifeſt argument of a double covenant; but of this more anon.

3. The apoſtle's confirmation of this concluſion is in the laſt words of the text, *Which was eſtabliſhed upon better promiſes:* where you may note, 1. That theſe covenants he ſpeaks of, have promiſes for their foundation: better promiſes in the ſecond,

argue good in the firſt; for the word better is comparative, and comparative unto a poſitive, which ſignifies good; promiſes then are the foundation of both theſe covenants; and this is worth the obſervation when we ſhall come to conſider what they are. 2. He proves that Chriſt is the mediator of a better covenant, by two arguments. 1. Tho' both are founded upon promiſes, yet that which Chriſt is mediator of, is founded upon better, and therefore muſt be a better covenant. 2. Tho' their covenant was founded upon promiſes, yet was it not eſtabliſhed upon them, much leſs upon better promiſes; but, ſaith the apoſtle, here the covenant that Chriſt mediated was better, in that it was eſtabliſhed upon better promiſes. They were ſweet promiſes whereupon their covenant was confirmed, but they were not ſo durable, but that the covenant itſelf was to ſink, and did ſink to the ground; that was not eſtabliſhed, it was not firm and unchangeable; but the covenant that Chriſt mediated is better; it is an eſtabliſhed one, a covenant that never ſhall be changed nor altered, as theirs was. Here are heads enough, I confeſs, to take up a great deal more time than is fit to trouble your patience with; I ſhall not preſume ſo far upon you.

But, that I may, as near as may be, confine myſelf within ſome limits, I ſhall reduce the main principles of all theſe heads unto two things, and confine my diſcourſe only to them.

I. What theſe covenants are, namely, that whereof Chriſt himſelf is ſaid to be mediator, and that other which is oppoſed unto it.

II. Wherein the covenant whereof Chriſt himſelf

ſelf is mediator, is better than that which thoſe prieſts did adminiſter.

It may be you may ſee ſome things in the reſolution of theſe, that may be ſome ſatisfaction to your ſpirits.

I. What theſe covenants are, and how diſtinct. I will not meddle with particular covenants, which God made with ſome ſpecial perſons that came not within this compaſs: there are certain general covenants that God made with men; uſually they are reduced to two heads; the firſt is commonly called the covenant of works, firſt made in innocency; the terms thereof are of a double nature, *Do this and live*; and *curſed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them*; life upon doing, a curſe upon not doing; in ſum, the covenant of works ſtands upon theſe terms, that in perfect obedience there ſhould be life; at the firſt failing therein, no remedy, no admittance of remiſſion of ſins upon any terms in the world; Chriſt cannot come in, nor be heard upon the terms of the covenant of works. There is a ſecond general covenant, and that is uſually called, a new covenant, or a covenant of grace; and this, in oppoſition to the other, ſtands wholly in matter of grace without works thro' Chriſt: This, as far as I can find, is generally received to be the right diſtribution of the covenants of God; the covenant of grace being moſt commonly taken for one entire covenant from firſt to laſt: now to draw it to our purpoſe; if this diſtribution be good, the iſſue at length muſt be this; ſeeing there are two covenants ſpoken of here by the apoſtle, which

we ſhall make good by-and-by, they muſt needs be referred to that diſtribution of thoſe two heads, and ſo the ſum muſt be this; the covenant of grace being better than the covenant of works, Chriſt muſt be the mediator of it; and then there remains no other, whereof thoſe prieſts were mediators, but that of works.

For my own part, beloved, I ſhall not take upon me to cenſure any man's judgment; only I ſhall deſire to propoſe ſomething to the conſideration of the wiſe, who, upon deliberate advice, may ſee ſomething worth their meditation: to me it ſeems moſt plain, that the oppoſition the apoſtle here makes, is not between the covenant of works and that of grace; and that he, in all this diſcourſe, hath not the leaſt glance upon the covenant of works at all, nor doth he meddle with it: You know, beloved, that the articles of that covenant, are drawn up in the decalogue of the moral law; and, in all this diſcourſe, from chap. vii. 1. to the end of chap. x. the apoſtle doth not ſo much as take notice of the moral law, nor hath he to do one jot with any clauſe of it; all the oppoſition here is not between Chriſt and *Moſes*, but between prieſt and prieſt, office and office; Chriſt is a prieſt after the order of *Melchiſedeck*, they prieſts after the order of *Aaron*; Chriſt is the miniſter of a perfect covenant, they of an imperfect one: now, if it were between the covenant of works, and the covenant of grace, then he ſhould have gone on with the covenant of works, and the articles of that, and ſet them in oppoſition unto Chriſt, which he doth not.

But

But it may be, ſome will ſay, if there be a diſtinct difference between covenants, ſurely then they can be no other but theſe two of grace and works, and therefore the oppoſition muſt needs be between them.

Beloved, give me leave to anſwer freely, the whole adminiſtration of that covenant, which the prieſts had to manage, was wholly and only matter of grace; and tho' it were a covenant of grace, yet it is oppoſed to that which Chriſt in his own perſon mediated; therefore the oppoſition which ſtands here, is not between the covenant of works, and of grace; but it is between the covenant of grace weak, imperfect, unprofitable, diſannulled; and another covenant of grace that is perfect, eſtabliſhed, and makes the comers thereunto perfect.

So that indeed, tho' Chriſt be the ſubject-matter of the covenant of grace, whether old or new, and tho' there be remiſſion of ſins in both; (for I call the prieſts covenant now the old, and that I will make good preſently,) yet, I ſay, there is ſuch a difference between theſe two, that they are two diſtinct covenants one from the other.

That it may appear to you, that they are both covenants of grace, and yet two diſtinct ones alſo, conſider briefly theſe particulars.

1. It is granted of all men, that in the covenant of works, there is no remiſſion of ſin, no notice of Chriſt; but the whole imployment of the prieſts of the old law, was altogether about remiſſion of ſins, and the exhibiting Chriſt in their faſhion unto the people. In *Numb.* xv. 28. (I will give you but one inſtance,) you ſhall plainly ſee that the adminiſtration of the prieſtly office had remiſ-

ſion of ſins as the main end of it. *If a ſoul ſin thro' ignorance, he ſhall bring a ſhe-goat unto the prieſt, and he ſhall make an atonement for the ſoul that ſinneth ignorantly, and it ſhall be forgiven him:* ſee, the main end is adminiſtring forgiveneſs of ſins.

And that Chriſt was the main ſubject of their miniſtry is plain, becauſe the apoſtle ſaith in the verſe before my text, that all that adminiſtration was but a ſhadow of him, and a figure for the preſent to repreſent him, as he expreſſes it in chap. ix. and the truth is, the uſual goſpel that all the *Jews* had, was in their ſacrifices and prieſtly obſervations; it is true, the prophets propheſied of a glorious goſpel, but moſtly you ſhall find that the moſt excellent goſpel they preached, was always preached with reference to the future. The prophet *Jeremiah* hath an excellent paſſage in chap. l. 20. *The iniquity of* Iſrael *ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none*; but mark it, it's in thoſe days, and at that time, it ſhall be ſought for, and not found; he doth not ſpeak this of the preſent, but of future times; therefore St. *Peter* obſerves, that when they propheſied concerning the fulneſs of grace, they did not propheſy unto themſelves, but unto us, 1 *Pet.* i. 12. the main goſpel they had, was to be fetched out of thoſe trivial obſervations, ceremonies, ſacrifices, and gifts which they were to attend upon, whence they were to fetch their pardon thro' Chriſt.

So that it's plain, the adminiſtration of their covenant was an adminiſtration of grace, abſolutely diſtinct from that of the covenant of works. That Chriſt's covenant was a covenant of grace, I will not ſtand to prove; I know no man queſtions it that

that profeſſes himſelf a chriſtian; but now tho' theſe two, as it appears plainly, are covenants of grace; ſo it ſhall appear as fully to you that they are two diſtinct covenants of grace; they are not one and the ſame covenant diverſly adminiſtred, but they are two diſtinct covenants [c].

To make it good, becauſe I know ſome may think much of this that I deliver, I ſhall deſire you to receive nothing, but as the plain ſcripture will make it evident unto you: for this purpoſe firſt conſult chap. viii. 7. There are, if I miſtake not, three arguments in thoſe few words, to prove that they are two divers covenants. *If the firſt had been faultleſs, then ſhould no place have been ſought for the ſecond*; where obſerve, that having ſpoken before in the text of a better covenant, whereof Chriſt is the miniſter and mediator; he ſaith in oppoſition to this, *If the firſt had been faultleſs.*

Again,

[c] Notwithſtanding all the worthy Dr. has ſaid, theſe don't appear to be two covenants eſſentially diſtinct; ſince he himſelf owns, that Chriſt is the ſubject-matter of both, and remiſſion of ſins is in them both; and though called *firſt* and *ſecond*, and the latter coming in the place of the former, this may be ſaid of one form of adminiſtration of the covenant ſucceeding another. Mr. *Lancaſter, Vindication of the Goſpel*, p. 199. thinks the controverſy may be compromiſed by diſtinguiſhing the *old covenant* into the *promiſe veiled*, the ſame in ſubſtance with that in the new teſtament, and the *veil itſelf* done away; which is giving up the point, ſince that is no other than the ceremonial law, the outward form of adminiſtring the covenant of grace under the former diſpenſation, and was a ſhadow of good things to come by Chriſt, clearly revealed under the preſent adminiſtration: however, this is a matter of no very great importance; and the Dr. has excellently ſhewn the difference between theſe two, be they called what they will; and, indeed, properly ſpeaking, the covenant of grace, as made, was before them both, even from eternity.

Again, here you ſee the apoſtle expreſly calls theſe the firſt and the ſecond; *If the firſt had been faultleſs, there ſhould have been no place for the ſecond.* Now that it ſhould be affirmed of one and the ſame covenant, that this is the firſt, and that this is the ſecond, and yet theſe two ſhould be both one, is ſtrange: *There are three that bear record in heaven, the father, the word, and the ſpirit:* it is true, the divine eſſence is one; but conſider as there are three perſons, they are not one; ſo if you will conſider any thing as they are two, they are not one: now theſe covenants are called firſt and ſecond, therefore they cannot be both one.

Again, the apoſtle ſpeaks of a ſecond coming in the place of the firſt; we cannot ſay of one and the ſelf-ſame covenant, that it comes in place of itſelf; when one thing comes in the place of another, theſe two muſt needs be diſtinct: can you ſay of the one and the ſame thing, that it is diſannulled, and that it is not? that it vaniſhes, and yet that it is come in the place of itſelf when it vaniſhes? In chap. vii. 18. you ſhall find plainly that the apoſtle, ſpeaking of the covenant under the prieſthood, calls it *the commandment that went before*; and ſays, it was diſannulled in that it was weak and unprofitable. And in chap. x. 9. he tells us, that *he takes away* (ſpeaking of Chriſt) *the firſt, that he may eſtabliſh the ſecond*; ſo that here you may plainly ſee, that theſe two covenants, one is not only called firſt, and the other ſecond; but the one is ſo the firſt, and the other ſo the ſecond, that the firſt muſt be taken away, that the ſecond may come in place; and that the ſecond doth not come till the firſt be diſannulled: but all the queſtion will

will be, whether, when the apoſtle ſpeaks thus of firſt and ſecond, of old and new, of better and worſe, of diſannulling and coming in place; whether he means the covenant of grace, under which the *Jews* were, and that under which we are in Chriſt, or ſome other.

For clearing this, I beſeech you, conſider what he ſpeaks for the illuſtrating his own mind. In chap. viii. 8. having made a diſtinction of better and faulty, of firſt and ſecond, ſee how he proves what he ſpeaks, that they are diſtinct: *For finding fault with them, he ſaith, The days come when I will make a new covenant with the houſe of* Iſrael, *and with the houſe of* Judah, *not according to the covenant I made with their fathers, when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of* Egypt, (and as *Jeremiah* adds; for he takes all this out of *Jer.* xxxi. 31.) *Although I was an husband to them*; and in the cloſe of all, *Your ſins and iniquities will I remember no more.* 1. You ſee the apoſtle from *Jeremiah*, brings a direct diſtinction of two covenants; *I will make a new covenant, not according to the covenant I made with their fathers.* Here are two covenants, a new one, and one made with their fathers. Some may think it was the covenant of works at the promulgation of the moral law; but mark well that expreſſion of *Jeremiah*, and you ſhall ſee it was the covenant of grace; *For*, (ſaith he) *not according to the covenant I made with their fathers, although I was an husband unto them.* How can God be conſidered as huſband to a people under the covenant of works, which was broken by man in innocency, and ſo became diſannulled? the covenant of works runs thus; *Curſed is every*

one

one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law; and, *in the day that thou ſinneſt thou ſhalt die the death*. Man had ſinned before God took him by the hand to lead him out of the land of *Egypt*, and ſin had ſeparated man from God; how then can he be called a huſband in the covenant of works? The covenant therefore was not a covenant of works, but ſuch a one as the Lord became a huſband in, and that muſt be a covenant of grace; and yet, ſaith he, *I will make a new covenant, not according to the covenant I made with their fathers*, &c. In the cloſe of this chapter, ſee how the apoſtle ſums up the matter; *In that he ſaith a new, ſaith he, the firſt is waxed old, and ſo is ready to vaniſh away*; here you ſee again, how he makes this diſtinction between the covenants, old and new; one being new, is freſh; the other being old, is ready to vaniſh away: again conſider, in chap. ix. he goes on, as with main ſtrength to make good the thing, that there are two diſtinct covenants; *The firſt covenant verily*, ſaith he, *had alſo ordinances of divine ſervice, and a worldly ſanctuary*. What is this firſt covenant? The apoſtle reckons up all the implements of it; he ſpeaks of their candleſtick, table, and gifts, and ſo goes along; but mark in ver. 14. what oppoſition he makes; *Wherefore*, ſaith he, *Chriſt is a mediator of the new teſtament*. Wherefore, upon what terms is this? In that firſt covenant there was but blood of bulls and goats, which could never perfect the comers thereunto, as pertaining to the conſcience; but when Chriſt comes with his own blood, *He obtained eternal redemption, and ſo purged the conſcience from dead works:*

works: ſo that by this you may perceive, he makes abſolute diſtinction between the firſt, which did conſiſt in thoſe rites, and that whereof Chriſt is the mediator; in a word, in chap. x. he renews the diſtinction once more; the law conſiſted in burnt ſacrifices, offerings, *&c.* which could never make the comers thereunto perfect, ver. 1. but there was a remembrance of ſin once every year; therefore, ſaith the apoſtle (ſpeaking of the Lord) *Sacrifices and offerings thou wouldeſt not; then, ſaid I,* (that is Chriſt) *Lo, I come, to do thy will, O God. In that he ſaith, Lo, I come, he takes away the firſt, that he might eſtabliſh the ſecond.* If all this be not a ſufficient evidence to clear this, that they are diſtinct covenants; and ſo diſtinct, that tho' both be covenants of grace, yet the one muſt be diſannulled before the other can be eſtabliſhed; I know nothing that can be proved by ſcripture.

But to come to the main thing; there being two diſtinct covenants, let us ſee wherein that which Chriſt adminiſtred, is better than that the prieſts did; and this will be of very great concern to the ſettling of ſpirits: the differences are marvellous; the apoſtle expreſſes them in ſuch language, that, I dare be bold to ſay, if any man ſhould utter it, and not have his warrant from him, he would go nigh to be cenſured. That firſt covenant, tho' it was a covenant of grace, yet he ſpares not to ſay, that it was not faultleſs, that is, it was not without fault; he goes further, he ſaith it was unprofitable, yea, weak; nay, which is marvellous to conſider, he calls the adminiſtration of that covenant, *beggarly rudiments*; whereas, on the other ſide, in the covenant Chriſt manages, he ſays,

By

By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified, chap. x. 14. The difference then ſtands in theſe two things.

The covenant which the prieſts adminiſtred, was a very imperfect one; that Chriſt manages, is moſt abſolute, compleat, and perfect. There was a neceſſity of adding many things unto their covenant; but that which Chriſt managed, is ſo compleat, that nothing in the world can be added to it: if any will ſtumble at the word faulty, you muſt underſtand, beloved, that there is a two-fold faultineſs in things; it may be either ſinful, or imperfect; the covenant was not ſinfully faulty, for it was of God's own making that cannot ſin; but you will ſay, being ſo, it cannot be imperfect.

You muſt diſtinguiſh perfection, which is two-fold; a thing may be ſaid to be perfect, in reſpect of the end for which it was ordained, or to compaſs higher ends than it was ordained to: as for that firſt covenant of grace, it was not imperfect for that end that God appointed; for it did all that he purpoſed ſhould be done by it; but it was imperfect to do ſo much as Chriſt himſelf did. This is the main thing I would proſecute, to let you ſee wherein the covenant that Chriſt managed, excells the covenant which the prieſts managed: there are three things principally wherein they differ. I will paſs by many ordinary differences.

1. Chriſt's covenant is better, in reſpect of the remiſſion of ſins.

2. In reſpect of peace of conſcience.

3. In reſpect of freedom from puniſhment and wrath as the deſert of ſin.

1. I

1. I have ſhewed before, that ſome remiſſion of ſins was under the *Jews* covenant of grace; I ſhall now endeavour to let you ſee wherein that was imperfect, in compariſon of what Chriſt hath now brought by his own offering himſelf once for all. It may be, this may ſeem ſomewhat ſtrange, that I ſhould affirm, that their remiſſion of ſins was imperfect; but, beloved, the apoſtle ſpeaks fully to the point, and ſaith expreſsly, that there was *remembrance of ſins again every year*, chap. x. But, to handle things diſtinctly and particularly.

1. Their remiſſion of ſins was imperfect, in compariſon of what Chriſt by his own perſon hath wrought; they had not in their covenant a plenary remiſſion of all ſorts of ſins; they could not tell whither to go to find pardon for ſome [d]. This is plain in *Numb.* xv. 28,--30. where, *Moſes* ſpeaking of one ſinning by ignorance, a ſhe-goat being brought, there might be an atonement made for him, and the ſin might be forgiven: but mark what follows, *The ſoul that ſins preſumptuouſly ſhall die*; here is a ſacrifice for ſins of ignorance, but *the ſoul that ſins preſumptuouſly ſhall die*, no ſacrifice for that. So again, *Gen.* xvii. 14. you ſhall find, that there was no ſacrifice to be had for uncircumciſion; *The man-child, that ſhall not be circumciſed, ſhall be cut off*; no other remedy, no appeal to other ſacrifices; here was no ſparing him by any means; no ſacrifice to expiate his tranſgreſſion. In *Exod.* xxxi. 14. alſo you ſhall ſee that there was no pardon to be met with for the profanation

[d] Not but the ſaints under the old teſtament had full forgiveneſs by looking to the blood and ſacrifice of Chriſt, which cleanſed from all ſin then, as now, but not by legal ſacrifices, or in the *Moſaic* adminiſtration.

phanation of the ſabbath, but that ſoul muſt be cut off; and, ſo, whoſoever eat of the ſacrifice, and had uncleanneſs upon him, muſt be cut off, *Lev.* vii. 20. I might inſtance in many other particulars; but certainly there was variety of ſins for which no ſacrifice could be admitted, and conſequently no pardon obtained, nor ſued out for them[e]: for pardon of ſin was ſued out upon thoſe ſacrifices God required: but now mark the difference; herein is the covenant, whereof Chriſt was the mediator, infinitely better than that other, in the large extent of pardon which it brought along with it. For this purpoſe, look into 1 *Joh.* i. 7. where he ſaith, *The blood of Jeſus Chriſt, his Son, cleanſeth us from all ſin.* Obſerve it, I pray you, *from all ſin*; ſee the extent of it; you cannot name the ſin which a perſon would be willing to caſt off, and have a pardon for, but the blood of Chriſt cleanſeth from it. If the *Jews* would have given all their eſtates, that they might have been admitted to bring ſacrifice for ſuch and ſuch a ſin, it could not be; *But the blood of Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin.*

But you will ſay, in chap. x. 26. the apoſtle ſeems to intimate, as if there were ſome ſins for which we can have no remiſſion; his words are theſe; *If we ſin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more ſacrifice for ſin.* Here, ſome may ſay, it ſeems that if a perſon ſhall happen to ſin wilfully, after he hath received the knowledge of the truth, there is no ſacrifice for ſin. I beſeech

[e] Pardon of ſin might be ſued out by faith then, upon the blood and ſacrifice of Chriſt; but not upon legal ſacrifices, which for ſome ſins were not admitted, and yet were pardoned through Chriſt, as *David*'s, and others.

I beſeech you, give me leave to open to you the meaning of the apoſtle, and his plain drift. I find thouſands of perſons are mightily miſtaken in it, and ſo the text comes to be a very fearful burthen upon their ſpirits; but that you may underſtand the ſcope of it aright, know, that there he is cloſing all the former diſcourſe, which ſtands mainly in theſe two things; that there is now one perfect ſacrifice once offered by Chriſt himſelf, that perfectly doth all things to be done, and, therefore, muſt be offered no more; and that all the ſacrifices that were to be offered, are now vaniſhed; and, in the interim, he comes to this concluſion: now that you have received the knowledge of this truth, that all ſacrifices muſt now ceaſe, if you ſin wilfully, that is, if you will reject this truth I have delivered unto you; if you think that this one ſacrifice is not enough to ſerve your turn, but you will look to others, there remains no more ſacrifice for your ſin: as if he ſhould ſay, You will but deceive yourſelves to look in any other way for pardon; you may think ſuch and ſuch ſervices, confeſſions, prayers, faſtings, will do ſomething towards the remiſſion of ſins; but deceive not yourſelves in this, there remains no more ſacrifice for ſin. Chriſt was but once offered; if you will not conclude to adhere to that one ſacrifice once offered; nor have that to bring perfect remiſſion of ſins, you will certainly miſcarry; there will be no other remedy, but indignation and wrath will fall upon you; every thing elſe will fail; that is the firſt. I beſeech you have patience, and let me but open myſelf, leſt I leave both myſelf and the truth to ſcandal.

2. The covenant he brings, is more perfect, in that tho' there was remiſſion of ſins in it, and ſo it differs from the covenant of works; yet mark it, and you ſhall find, that their covenant, tho' it was a covenant of grace, did not adminiſter grace, but upon antecedent conditions to be performed, before there could be any participation of the grace of it [f]; I ſay, there muſt be many things done firſt, before a pardon could be heard of; whereas, under the covenant of grace, which Chriſt brings, there is no antecedent condition at all; but the whole grace is communicated before ever the perſon doth any thing towards it. In that covenant they muſt be at the coſt of ſacrifices, muſt bring them to the tabernacle, muſt confeſs their ſins to the prieſt; and, (for ought I know) in caſes of extremity, muſt faſt too, before they could obtain pardon of ſin, and removal of judgment; but the covenant that Chriſt brings into the world himſelf, is ſuch, that before ever the perſon could be able to do any one thing in the world that is good, the whole grace of it is made his, and we need not be at the coſt of a ſacrifice, Chriſt is at that himſelf; we need not bring a Chriſt, he brings himſelf; we need not offer him, he offers himſelf; nay, our confeſſion of ſin is not antecedent to the forgiveneſs of it; remiſſion doth not depend upon that, but only upon the grace of God; *I am found of them that ſought me not; before they call, I will anſwer.*

Do

[f] That is, in the *Moſaic* way, or according to the adminiſtration of the covenant of grace in that way; otherwiſe ſaints then, as now, had the pardon of their ſins freely, looking to the grace of God and blood of Chriſt, and were juſtified as freely, and ſaved by the free grace of God, even as we are.

Do but mark, beloved, how the terms of the covenant of grace by Chriſt run; *Even while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the blood of Chriſt*; there could be no good thing done before our reconciliation, when we were conſidered ſimply and only as enemies: and ſo in *Ezek.* xvi. 6, 8. *When I ſaw thee polluted in thy blood, thy time was the time of love; I ſware unto thee, and entered into covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine:* when? *When thou waſt in thy blood*; there is no antecedent doing, before the participation of the covenant; nay, the covenant is ſworn, even when in blood. The apoſtle, in *Rom.* iv. 5. tells us, *That to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteouſneſs.* Chriſt conſiders men under no other notion but ungodly, when he confers the grace of his covenant upon them: you ſhall never hear, in all the old covenant, pardon beſtowed, before works of bringing, and offering ſacrifice; but under the covenant of grace, there is no reſpect of good works to the participation of it, even true faith itſelf is no condition of this covenant *, neither is it required as an antecedent to it, or to forgiveneſs. True faith indeed, is the evidence of things not ſeen; we know not that ſin is pardoned, 'till we believe, becauſe it is hid in the breaſt of God, or rather veiled in the goſpel, under general terms, until Chriſt gives faith unto men; whereby, they ſee their ſins, as well as other mens, are forgiven; but ſimply to the conveyance of the pardon itſelf, there is nothing in the world but grace.

* See the note on page 140.

You know, beloved, a prince ſometimes looks upon a condemned perſon in pity, and conſidering him as a dying man, out of grace gives him his pardon; and thus did the Lord by Chriſt in a new covenant; he looks upon ſuch and ſuch, as he ſees good, going to execution, and merely out of pity caſt upon them in this deplorable condition, ſends Chriſt with pardon to them; not calling upon men to change their perſons, to come thus and thus handſome, and then he will ſay ſomething unto them; but as they are condemned malefactors, and come to execution, ſo he offers his pardon.

3. Though there was pardon under the old covenant, yet know, that what they had, was but *gradatim*, and ſucceſſively, as they offered ſacrifice; it was not continued, and ſucceſſive, but it had interims and ſtops; in plain language, the covenant of the *Jews* reached out pardon of ſin only ſo far forth, as it was committed before ſuch and ſuch a ſacrifice was offered; if a man had ſinned ignorantly, 'till he had brought a ſacrifice, his ſin lay upon him; when he did bring it, it took away but that ſin; it did not, neither could it, extend to future ſins. Here preſently is a ſucceſſion of ſin, and this muſt lie, 'till there come a ſecond ſacrifice to take away that; and when that is gone, a third ſin lies again upon the heart; and that's not gone, 'till there comes a new ſacrifice for it: and the reaſon the apoſtle ſaith, *There is a remembrance again of ſin*; becauſe, *The comers thereto could not be perfect*; that is, they indeed had pardon by drops, now for one ſin, then for another; it may be a week, a month's diſtance

diſtance between, before they could have it; and ſtill they had it, as their ſacrifice was offered: mark the inconvenience of this; ſo long as any ſin lay upon their ſpirits, theſe were under the burthen of their own tranſgreſſions; this is the reaſon you have often among the *Jews* ſo many complaints; *My ſins are like a ſore burden, too heavy for me to bear*; and of the exceeding bitterneſs of their ſpirits. No marvel, beloved, they were to bear their own ſins; 'till the ſacrifice came there was no diſcharge; ſo that in the interim ſin lay upon their conſciences: but mark how the covenant that Chriſt brought was better than that they had; *By one ſacrifice once offered, hath he perfected for ever them that are ſanctified:* as much as to ſay, thoſe that are under this, are not put to theſe ſtops and interims for pardon, and are not to wait the time of the ſacrifice, that ſo they may receive it from ſuch a ſacrifice; nor after they have ſome teſtimony of it, do they now lie under the weight of a ſin new committed; but Chriſt did ſo perfectly go through the work of redemption, and taking away ſin, that by one ſacrifice he took it away at once for ever. Here, beloved, lies one of the chiefeſt comforts, of the whole goſpel of Chriſt, to ſee that in him, ſins paſt, preſent, and to come, are all at once wrapt up in this one ſacrifice of his; there is an expiation before-hand for ſin that ſhall be committed; there is not an expectation of a future expiation; a ſacrifice is already offered of value ſufficient to take away the ſins that afterward are committed; the value of this ſacrifice went both upward and downward; upward to *Adam* for the full pardon

of all the ſins of the elect, until Chriſt came; and it goes downward ſince he came, for the pardon of all the ſins of every elect perſon until the end of the word: ſo that in conſideration of ſin committed ſince he offered himſelf, there is not ſome new thing to be done; but herein ſtands the perfection of what Chriſt did, it ſerves fully and compleatly for every purpoſe that could poſſibly happen afterwards.

There is but one particular more, and that is this, they had pardon (it is true) but as I may ſo ſay, that covenant tho' it did ſweep, yet it left a great deal of duſt behind; I mean this, tho' their daily and occaſional ſacrifices did take away ſin, yet they did not take it away clean, but left ſome ſcattering of it behind: and this is plain by this, the apoſtle ſaith, there were in theſe ſacrifices, a remembrance of ſin again every year; that is, there muſt be an annual ſacrifice to ſweep away thoſe reliques of the duſt of ſin, which [their * daily ſacrifice did leave behind; ſo that there was fain to come a yearly ſacrifice to take away ſin, to make a clean riddance after theſe ſacrifices, which could not do it; when theſe were offered, tho' there was ſomething of remiſſion of ſins, yet certainly there remained ſomething of ſin behind, and that till a year came about, or elſe that ſacrifice once a year was in vain. Why could not their daily ſacrifices do it? God would not, that they ſhould make a clear riddance: and even that yearly ſacrifice did not do it; for there muſt come another yearly ſacrifice after that, and another after

* From hence to theſe words, *for the apoſtle ſaith expreſsly*, &c. is wanting in the laſt edition.

after that; but now there remains no ſacrifice for ſin; no yearly, no daily, no occaſional ſacrifices for the taking away of ſin.

But, you will ſay, will you take away all manner of duties and ſervices under the goſpel? I anſwer, I take not away the duty, no, by no means, but the end; there is no duty we perform, that is now a ſacrifice to take away ſin; nothing but the blood of Chriſt only, takes away ſin: as for the ſervices of chriſtians, there are many other purpoſes for which they are required; as to expreſs obedience to the will of God, the ſerving our generation, the ſetting forth the praiſe of the glory of God's free grace; theſe are the ends of our ſervices; but to expect, by any ſervice we do, to obtain pardon of ſin, is abſolutely *Jewiſh*, a new ſacrifice upon commiſſion of new ſins; and directly overthrows all the fulneſs and ſufficiency of that one ſacrifice, offered by Chriſt himſelf.

2. The difference between theſe two covenants, ſtands in quieting the conſcience; this follows neceſſarily upon the former. As there remains ſomething of ſin in that covenant of the *Jews*, ſo there muſt remain ſomething of terror and trouble upon their conſcience; a tender and well enlightened conſcience, always ſees and feels ſin where it is; if there be any, a tender conſcience feels it, and the gripe and gird of it; now, in that, there were ſometimes ſome ſins upon their perſons, no marvel that there were pain in their conſciences for ſin, for the apoſtle] ſaith expreſly, *That thoſe gifts and ſacrifices could not take away ſin, as pertaining to the conſcience*; that is, they could not ſo take it away, that the conſcience ſhould be

eaſed; for ſtill there would be new ſins committed that would diſquiet it; hence it is that they cry, out of the bitterneſs of their ſpirits, that ſin did lie upon them. But, beloved, that which Chriſt brought is better than this, in that *the blood of Chriſt purges the conſcience from dead works*; for which cauſe he is called, *The mediator of a new teſtament*; becauſe his blood obtained a redemption, purged the conſcience, not only from the foul acting of things, but from thoſe ſins, which, while they remain, lie as a weight to torment the ſpirit. Chriſt takes away all the ſins of men; either you muſt ſay, Chriſt's ſacrifice doth not take away all, or that there is not a ſin left, after Chriſt hath cleanſed the conſcience of a man. In a word, to cloſe up all.

3. The covenant that Chriſt brought was better, in regard of wrath and judgment for ſin. Juſtice, you know, follows ſin at the heels; where it finds ſin, there it executes; juſtice finding ſin now and then upon the *Jews*, under that covenant, as it met with them, ſo gave them a laſh for them; hence you have thoſe many complaints of God's juſtice plaguing them always: it was juſtice, becauſe there was ſin, which was their own, and was charged upon themſelves, 'till the ſacrifice came, and therefore their judgment was juſt; but Chriſt is the mediator of a better covenant, in that as he hath taken away all ſin, ſo he hath taken away all the deſert of it: though it be true under the goſpel, the Lord chaſtiſes his people as a father with his rod; yet he never pours out indignation and wrath as their deſert; he never looks to ſatisfy himſelf with any puniſhment of any member

member of Chriſt; for he beheld the travail of Chriſt, and was ſatisfied with that, *Iſa.* liii. and when God is once ſatisfied, he will never demand another ſatisfaction: if Chriſt hath worn out the rod of wrath to the ſtumps, and caſt it into the fire, certainly there is no more of it to be remembered: the apoſtle is full to this, *Gal.* iii. 24. ſpeaking of the *Jews*, he ſaith, that they were under a ſchool-maſter, *i. e.* a ſcourge, until Chriſt; for ſo are the words in the original: *The law*, ſaith he, *was a ſchool-maſter until Chriſt; but when faith was come, we are no longer under a ſchool-maſter.* They indeed were fit to be ſcourged, becauſe they were in a ſtate ſubject to ſin, guilt, and faults, until Chriſt came; but when faith, that is, Chriſt himſelf was come, were no longer under a ſchool-maſter; therefore in chap. iv. 1. the apoſtle calls them heirs indeed, becauſe at length they did attain ſalvation; but in reſpect of the weight and burthen of the rod upon them, he ſaith, that for the preſent they differed nothing from ſervants; *The heir, as long as he is a child, differs nothing from a ſervant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors, until the appointed time of the father*; that is, 'till Chriſt came; but when the fulneſs of time was come, God ſent forth his Son: I know it may be well interpreted of delivering perſons in general, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, from under the ſlavery of ſin; but doubtleſs the apoſtle hath an eye to this; namely, in reſpect of the imperfection of taking ſin from them, they did bear indignation and wrath for ſo much ſin as was upon them; whenas Chriſt takes away all wrath and indignation from us, as it is the deſert of ſin.

Uſe

Uſe 1. In all this you may ſee the glorious liberty *wherewith Chriſt hath made you free*, wherein ſtand faſt, *and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.*

2. By keeping theſe truths, you ſhall be able to anſwer ſatisfactorily to the knottieſt objections that are or can be made againſt the free grace of God in Chriſt, eſpecially from examples and actions under the old covenant.

SERMON XVII.

Chriſt the Great Paymaſter of all the Debts of his People.

ISAIAH liii. 6. latter part.

And the Lord hath laid [or, made to meet] *on him, the iniquity of us all.*

OF all the choſen veſſels to bear the name of Chriſt prophetically, before the children of *Iſrael*, there is none ſo like the apoſtles as this our prophet, in reſpect of the ſolemnity of his call; as appears by comparing both together; both he and they were called by viſible fire ſettling on them, *Iſa.* vi. 6, 7. *Acts* ii. 3, 4. Doubtleſs, this ſingular likeneſs of their calls, portended (as, indeed, in the event it proved) a ſingular likeneſs between their miniſtries,

ſtries, as if he had been ſingled out to be the fore-runner of them. Sure, if prediction be enough to denominate him a prophet, the glorious and precious goſpel he preached, ſo far beyond the accuſtomed ſtream of his times, may well admit him into the fellowſhip of the evangeliſts; ſcarce coming ſhort of any of them, in holding forth the *bright morning-ſtar*, or *ſun of righteouſneſs, with healing in his wings:* it is true, the other prophets now and then met with Chriſt in their perambulations; but, as they ſaw him at remote diſtance, ſo they could take but, as it were, a ſhadow of him, and accordingly repreſent him to the people; but this prophet ſeems to prepoſſeſs the beloved diſciple's place, even the boſom of Chriſt: you may, with one eye, eaſily ſee, by comparing him with the reſt, the vaſt difference. But to leave compariſons, becauſe ſome think them odious; how admirably he preacheth the free and full grace of God to ſelf-willed ſinners, let this chapter ſerve for a ſample; which both Chriſt himſelf, and his apoſtles, took ſo much notice of, that, of all the prophetic paſſages, there is none ſo frequently quoted by them, as theſe here mentioned, which the quotations in the margin point out unto you, as you may there ſee. In the prophet's entrance upon his ſweet diſcourſe of the unſearchable treaſures of God's love in Chriſt to his people, whiſpered, as it were, a ſecret in his ear, he ſeems to be at a ſtand; as if he could hardly tell whether to bring it to light, or hold his tongue, out of a probable ſuſpicion he had grounded on former experience, that this kind of doctrine would be rejected; *Who hath believed our report?* &c. ver. 1. Now

that

that this may not ſeem to be a calumny, but on good ground, in ver. 2. he gives an account of the reaſons moving him to it, beſides what occaſioned it from former experience. He knew that the people expected great matters from Chriſt when he came; (as well they might) and, therefore, that his firſt appearance ſhould promiſe much; and that if it ſhould be in a mean low way, which would carry no likelihood of compaſſing great matters, he ſhould not be believed: now it was revealed unto him, that Chriſt muſt *grow up as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground.* If, therefore, men judged according to outward appearance, (as probable they will) it might eaſily be judged that his labour would be in vain, and that he ſhould ſpend his ſtrength for nought. Who expects a fair and plentiful crop in a barren heath or wilderneſs? What elſe but inconſiderable ſhrubs? How can men hope better of him, who muſt *grow up as a root out of a dry ground?* So long as common principles of reaſon rule, and ingroſs concluſions, Chriſt appearing, as is fore-propheſied, will not be taken for the man he is, but rather be laughed to ſcorn: as indeed, when he did ſo appear, he was, by not only the vulgar, but alſo by the great doctors the Phariſees: afterwards the prophet more plainly expounds what he means by growing up as a root out of a dry ground; *He hath no form nor comelineſs*; that is, his face will promiſe little or nothing, ſo that for lack of outward beauty, no deſirableneſs will appear in him; hereupon, in ver. 3. he changeth his ſuſpicion into a peremptory aſſertion, and concludes, *He is deſpiſed and rejected of men, a man of ſorrows*, &c.

Yet,

Yet, for all this, our prophet was in travail, and could not be at eaſe till he had brought forth the man-child, who was to ſave his people from their ſins; it ſeems he was in *Elihu*'s temper, *Job* xxxii. 17, 18, 19. full of matter, and the Spirit within him conſtraining him, his belly was as wine which hath no vent; this raviſhing news from heaven muſt out, or he muſt burſt; ſpeak he will, that he may be refreſhed; tho' the moſt ſhould put it from them, yet, ſome few, he hoped, would gather crumbs of comfort from it, nay, be abundantly ſatisfied with the fatneſs of it; the dawning of the light whereof breaks forth in ver. 4. *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our ſorrows; yet we did eſteem him ſtricken, ſmitten of God, and afflicted:* where he clears up a ſecret objection, which, unto common principles, ariſeth out of the condition he was found in, *(viz.)* How can he be the Saviour of the world that cannot ſave himſelf? If God plunge him in wrath, ſure he can have but little power to prevail for the deliverance of others. The anſwer is touched in ver. 4. and more fully amplified and cleared up in ver. 5. The ſorrows and griefs he ſuſtained were not his own, but ours: it is true, he was wounded, bruiſed, and chaſtiſed, but not for any faults of his own, or out of any diſtaſte God took againſt his perſon, who was his beloved Son; but *he was wounded for our tranſgreſſions*, &c. In ver. 6. the prophet deſcribes what thoſe were, for which he was wounded; *All we like ſheep have gone aſtray; we have turned every one to his own way:* now, in my text, he clears up the juſtice of God in wounding him *for our tranſgreſſions*; for it might be objected, that there

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can be no equity to puniſh an innocent for a delinquent: but that ſhews, that tho' the delinquency be not his own act, yet the Lord laid it on him. As to the equity of laying it on him, we ſhall have a fair opportunity to clear it up in handling of the text; but, before I come to it, let us conſider what place theſe words muſt have, in order of nature, in this diſcourſe of the prophet: note, that tho' according to the order of the words, Chriſt is firſt ſaid to bear our ſorrows, then to be wounded, and then we have peace thro' his chaſtiſements, before our iniquities are laid on him; yet it is not rare to ſee the precious truths of God out of order in this regard: *Who hath ſaved us, and called us with an holy calling*, ſaith *Paul*, (I bring this but as one inſtance.) Salvation, as all know, in order of nature, and time alſo, follows our holy calling, yet in the words it hath precedency. It is ſo in this diſcourſe, the true method of the goſpel ſuppoſeth the creature's ſinfulneſs, as it is firſt laid down in this verſe, which gives the occaſion of Chriſt's being a Saviour; and, whereas wounds and ſtripes are the juſt wages of ſin, this ſinfulneſs of the creature muſt ſome way be on Chriſt, or elſe he might not in juſtice be wounded; punitive juſtice muſt firſt find a crime upon a man, before it can ſmite him; as for Chriſt, he himſelf never committed any fault, ver. 9. *He did no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth*, as the Lord himſelf ſays; therefore, it follows, that the ſins of others muſt be charged to his account, and he muſt be reſponſible for them, before he can juſtly be wounded; hence, in my text, *The Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all.* Now (as in ſuretyſhip)

our

our debt becoming his, the execution goes juſtly out againſt him, and ſo God can give a juſt account of wounding him; and he being thus wounded, that is, bearing the full indignation and wrath our ſins deſerve, and ſo ending all the quarrel God had againſt us; it follows, that theſe wounds of his become the *chaſtiſement of our peace*; God having hereby nothing to ſay againſt us; and ſeeing all is well between him and us, he doth not only take away the anguiſh, but alſo proceeds to make a perfect cure; *By his ſtripes we are healed.* And ſo I come to the words themſelves, which are as the dawning of the day after a ſad dark night; holding forth the firſt glimmerings of comfort to men, that have loſt themſelves in the dark. I confeſs it is ſupernatural for a man to ſee the exceeding horridneſs of ſin, he being naturally blind; but yet many attain this, who come ſhort of reaching the gracious mind of the Lord in acquitting men from their ſins (witneſs *Cain* and *Judas)* which is no where more fully revealed than in this text.

The truth is, however a careleſs eye may mind little extraordinary, or admirable in the words; yet I dare be bold to ſay, they contain well nigh the deepeſt myſteries of God, manifeſted in the fleſh; even thoſe things whereof our Saviour ſpeaks, when he gave thanks to the father, for *hiding them from the wiſe and prudent, and revealing them to babes.*

I am perſwaded, that not any who profeſs themſelves chriſtians, but will with both hands ſubſcribe to the whole text in general, without any contradiction. Oh, that the heart were ſtedfaſt in the ſeveral particulars! There is not a word in it but hath it's ſpecial weight: ſatan knows ſu.

well that each is a mortal dart to pierce the very heart of his deſtructive principles; and therefore is very buſy with wiles to ſophiſticate the precious truths held forth herein, and bitter malice to poiſon this fountain: as by his inſtruments he would cozen the world with droſs for gold, ſo would he, if it were poſſible, deceive the very elect, in making them believe their gold is but droſs; or at leaſt play the thief, and foiſt droſs into their hands inſtead of this gold.

But becauſe it is gold tried in the fire, as near as may be, we will not loſe a duſt of it; and for the more thrifty huſbanding hereof, let us ſift theſe particulars in the words; 1. What this is which the Holy Ghoſt tells us is laid on Chriſt, *The iniquity of us all:* 2. How this is diſpoſed of, *The Lord hath laid it on him:* 3. At whoſe diſpoſal it is, *The Lord:* 4. On whom he laid it, *Him:* 5. Whoſe iniquities the Lord laid on him, *The iniquity of us all:* 6. When he laid it on him, the time is paſt, *He hath laid it on him.* All which particulars offer to our conſideration ſo many ſeveral moſt comfortable propoſitions: as,

I. God not only inflicted the deſert of ſin on Chriſt, in wounding him for it, but alſo he laid even iniquity itſelf on him, I mean the iniquity of his elect.

II. God doth not connive at the iniquity of his people, as if, indeed, he knew well enough it lay on them, but yet he would over look it, and be content to ſuppoſe it on Chriſt, whilſt it remains indeed on them; but, in expreſs terms, the Lord hath laid them on Chriſt.

III. This laying of iniquity on Chriſt, is the ſole act

act of the Lord himſelf; none, nor any thing elſe can do it but he; Chriſt himſelf laid not the ſins of his people on himſelf, but the Lord laid them on him. Chriſt is but the mediator between God and them in this buſineſs; contentedly indeed, ſtooping to the burthen, when the Lord agreed, and would have it ſo; much leſs doth any act of man, whether it be repentance, or turning from his evil ways, or amendment of life, or his faith, in the pureſt act of it, lay them on him; or hath the leaſt hand therein.

IV. The iniquity of God's people is no otherwiſe diſpoſed of by way of transfer from them, but only on Chriſt; none can bear or carry away iniquity from them, but he alone.

V. That which was laid on Chriſt, was the iniquity of us all; even of us, who like ſheep have gone aſtray, and turned every one to our own way; that is, the Lord had no other conſideration in his thoughts at all, but our going aſtray, and turning to our own way, when he laid our iniquity on Chriſt: he did not obſerve any difference, as if one man were more lovely, or likely to be more ſerviceable, or were more pliable to his bent than others, which might win his love and pity; but looked only on their pollution in blood, rebellion, and enmity, taking the riſe of this grace of his only from within himſelf, even his own compaſſion.

VI. The Lord is not now to do this, nor is it reſerved till hereafter; but he hath laid them on Chriſt already; the act is paſt long before. And from hence ye may perceive, that there is not now a new thing to be done by the Lord in the tranſ-

ferring of mens ſins to Chriſt; as if when they begin to be called out of darkneſs into marvellous light, juſt then God begins to transfer ſin from them, and lay it upon Chriſt; ſo that the act of God's laying ſin upon him, is not a continued act, but what he hath done long before. In which point, it will be conſiderable to find out the time when the Lord laid the iniquity of his people upon Chriſt: and it will be further worth conſideration, ſeeing the Lord *hath laid them*, what is become of them? where do they remain? As for the perſon whoſe ſins are transferred, he is acquitted and diſcharged. And likewiſe Chriſt is acquitted of them too: *Hath laid*, imports them both. If he hath taken them off from him, that was the committer of them, and laid them upon Chriſt, they are gone from him too: if they were not gone from him too, the words would have been, the Lord *lays*, in the *preſent tenſe*; but they are in the *preterperfect tenſe*, *hath laid*. And this will be very clear, if you conſider, *Heb.* ix. 26. *He hath borne the ſins of many, and to them that look for him, he ſhall appear the ſecond time without ſin.* Mark it well, there was a time that Chriſt did not appear without ſin; for he bore the ſins of many; but there is a ſecond time when he ſhall appear, and then he ſhall be without ſin; ſo that believers have no ſins upon them, and Chriſt hath none neither.

Every of theſe particulars will require time to diſcuſs them fully; yet there is not any one of them, but will give ſweet conſolation to the moſt drooping ſpirit under heaven: we will take them into conſideration, and begin with the firſt of them.

I. It

I. It is iniquity itſelf, even the ſins themſelves of thoſe whom God intends ſhall reap benefit by Chriſt, that are laid on him. Satan hath raiſed a foul miſt to darken the glorious light of this admirable truth. At firſt looking on it, you may think there is nothing in it more than in other ordinary truths; but you ſhall find in the cloſe, that all the comfort you can take, concerning your freedom from ſin, will hang upon this point, that it is iniquity itſelf that is laid upon Chriſt. But, many are ready to think, that the guilt (ſuch as they call ſo) and the puniſhment of ſin lay upon Chriſt indeed; but ſimply the very fault that men commit, that is, that the tranſgreſſion itſelf, is become the tranſgreſſion of Chriſt, is ſomewhat harſh [g]: but when the text ſaith, *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all*; the meaning is, that Chriſt himſelf becomes the tranſgreſſor in the room and ſtead of the perſon that had tranſgreſſed; ſo that in reſpect of the reality of being a tranſgreſſor, Chriſt is as really the tranſgreſſor [h], as the man

[g] But it ſhould not ſeem harſh, ſince tranſgreſſions only become Chriſt's by imputation, or by being in the ſinner's ſtead, as immediately explained; nor that not the guilt and puniſhment of ſin only are laid on Chriſt, but the fault itſelf, ſince that is not to be ſeparated from guilt; and ſince the ſcripture is ſo expreſs, that ſin or iniquity itſelf is laid on Chriſt: hence the learned *Witſius* obſerves, "I know not why ſome ſhould chooſe to ſay, the guilt or puniſhment of our ſins are transferred to Chriſt, rather than ſins themſelves as to the guilt; ſince this latter is ſaid by ſcripture itſelf, whoſe moſt pure, moſt wiſe, and very emphatic ſpeeches, to deſire to ſoften, by I know not what milder ones of ours, ſhews a mind nice and ſqueamiſh, and not ſetting that juſt value on the ſacred writings due unto them." *Irenic. Animadv.* c. i. ſ. 15.

[h] Not the real actor and committer of the tranſgreſſion, as is afterwards explained, but as there was a real imputation of it to him, being the ſurety of his people who had tranſgreſſed; and is the true and only ſenſe in which the Dr. is to be

that did commit it was, before he took it upon him. Beloved, miſtake me not, I ſay, not that ever Chriſt was, or ever could be the actor, or committer of tranſgreſſion, for he never committed any; but the Lord laid iniquity upon him; and this act of God's laying it upon him, makes him as really a tranſgreſſor, as if he himſelf had actually committed it: and this I ſhall endeavour to clear by manifeſt ſcripture, that ſimply, without any equivocation, not in any figure, but plainly ſin itſelf was laid upon Chriſt; I ſhall then clear ſome objections, and ſhew the neceſſity of the thing.

Look but into *Iſ.* liii. 11, 12. there you ſhall find three words all expreſſing this one thing, that it is ſin itſelf, and aberrations, that are laid on Chriſt: *He ſhall bear their iniquities*, ver. 11. *He was numbered among the tranſgreſſors, and he bare the ſins of many:* mark it well, I pray.

Some have been ready to conceive, that the word iniquity in the text is ſpoken figuratively; iniquity, that is, the puniſhment of it, was laid on him; but ſee how careful the Spirit of God is, to take away all ſuſpicion of a figure in the text; there are iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin, three words, and all ſpoken to the ſame purpoſe, to confirm it; and it is ſtrange, that all theſe three ſhould ſtill be underſtood of puniſhment, and not ſimply of ſin itſelf without any figure; but, from hence it is clear,

be underſtood; for, as the excellent *Witſius*, juſt before quoted, ſays, "Not ſo God imputes our ſins to Chriſt, as to judge that he committed the ſins we have committed; as to be drunk with *Noah*, to commit inceſt with *Lot*, or adultery with *David*; ſuch a thought, ſo foreign from all reaſon, could never enter into any man in his ſenſes, much leſs a chriſtian, and one that fears God." *Ibid.* ſ. 11.

clear, that the iniquity itſelf, of the perſons for whom Chriſt ſuffered, is removed from a believer, and transferred upon him.

All the difficulty lies in that expreſſion, *He was numbered among the tranſgreſſors.* Some will be ready to ſay, he was ſo indeed, but by whom was he numbered? The Scribes and Phariſees called him a blaſphemer, and a ſeducer; and they ſaid, he had a devil, and was a glutton and wine-bibber; and according to the charge, they crucified him with tranſgreſſors, and ſo he was numbered amongſt them; but God did not account him ſo; and tho' they did, it doth not therefore follow that he was ſo.

I anſwer, Under favour, beloved, let me tell you, that in this place Chriſt being numbered amongſt tranſgreſſors, was ſpoken in reſpect of God's own accounting him among the number of tranſgreſſors; for he himſelf made him one at that time. Bear with the expreſſion; for the apoſtle hath one higher than this, tho' it may ſeem harſh to you. Look into 2 *Corinth.* v. 21. There you ſhall ſee that God made him more than a tranſgreſſor; *He was made ſin for us*; there is a great deal of difference between being made ſin, and being made a ſinner, with any that know how the expreſſion in the abſtract goes beyond that in the concrete: I know the word may be ſpoken hyperbolically; not that Chriſt ſimply could be made ſin, or his eſſence be turned into ſin; but the apoſtle's meaning was, that no tranſgreſſor in the world was ſuch a one as Chriſt was [i]. But ſtill

[i] This is true of Chriſt, not as the actor of tranſgreſſion, as the Dr. immediately obſerves, but as he was made ſo by imputation,

he was a tranſgreſſor, as our tranſgreſſions were laid upon him, not that he was the actor of any; and how could the Lord himſelf by his own act lay our tranſgreſſions upon him, and make him a tranſgreſſor; nay, make him ſin, and yet not number him among ſuch as were tranſgreſſors [k]? The

putation, in which reſpect he was the greateſt tranſgreſſor in the world; for let any man be ever ſo great a one, he has only his own ſins on him: but Chriſt, though he had none of his own, yet being the ſurety of his people, and ſtanding in their place, had all their ſins upon him, which he calls his own, and were innumerable, *Pſ.* xl. 12. and ſo was, by imputation, what no ſinner ever was, or could be; and this is ſaying no more than what divines, ancient and modern, have not ſcrupled to affirm. *Chryſoſtom* on 2 *Cor.* v. 21. ſays, God made him αμαρτωλον, a *ſinner*, yea more than that, *ſin itſelf*. *OEcumenius* on *Heb.* ix. p. 849. ſays, he was υπερφυρα αμαρτωλος, *an exceeding great ſinner*; ſince he took on him the ſins of the whole world, and made them his own. *Calvin* and *Beza*, on 2 *Cor.* v. 21. ſay, Chriſt was *peccator & reus, a ſinner and guilty*, and deſerving of the curſe, through the guilt of ſins imputed to him. See *Calvin* alſo in *Gal.* iii. 13. *Piſcator* on 2 *Cor.* v. 21. obſerves, that Chriſt being made ſin ſignifies *ſummum peccatorem*, all the ſins of all the elect being imputed to him. And *Marlorat* on the ſame text, has theſe words, that Chriſt died for us, as accurſed of God, and is *peccator omnium ſceleſtiſſimus*. Phraſes as ſtrong as any the Dr. has here or elſewhere; and which, though not contrary to the divine judgment concerning Chriſt as our ſurety; nor derogatory to the perfect purity and holineſs of our Lord; but are deſigned to expreſs the moſt perfect imputation of ſin to him, and the ſecurity of our ſalvation by him, as *Witſius* obſerves; yet I can't but be of opinion with that ſame great man, that it would be better to abſtain from the uſe of ſuch phraſes; ſince they are not ſcriptural, need much explanation, and may be offenſive to tender minds. *Animadv. Irenic.* c. i. ſ. 11. c. ii. ſ. 1, 4.

[k] That Chriſt was numbered by men among tranſgreſſors, is not denied; he was called and traduced by them as a ſinner, and placed between two thieves when crucified, which fulfilled the prophecy of *Iſaiah* in part, *Mark* xiv. 27, 28. But then this being ſuffered by the Lord, ſhews that he was accounted ſo by him, and ſtood in the eye of juſtice as among, and in the place of, tranſgreſſors; and that this is the ſenſe of the

The apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks very fully to this buſineſs, in 1 *Pet.* ii. 24. He tells us, That *he himſelf bare our ſins in his own body on the tree*; he bare our ſins, and it was he himſelf that did it, and it was on his own body: one would think that all theſe words need not; he might have only ſaid, he bare them in his body; but he ſaid more emphatically, *He himſelf bare our ſins in his own body*; he ſpeaks it ſo punctually, that all the world may ſee that there is no underhand, but plain dealing with God in this buſineſs; that ſo we may reſt ſatisfied with it, that being made partakers of Chriſt, our iniquities were laid upon him; and if they ever be looked after, it ſhould be where they are: and this is the main end why there are ſo many expreſſions in ſcripture, that our ſins are laid upon Chriſt, to imply, that when any ſearch is made for them among believers, they may know what is become of them, and ſo ſatisfy themſelves about it: do but obſerve that excellent expreſſion, *Jerem.* l. 20. Where you will find what the great ſcope and end is, why the Holy Ghoſt takes ſuch and ſo much care to let us know, that it is iniquity itſelf that is laid upon Chriſt. *In thoſe days, and at that time, ſhall the iniquities of* Iſrael *be ſought for, and there ſhall be none; and the ſins of* Judah, *and they ſhall not be found.*

Beloved, here is a ſtrange myſtery, the world will not receive it, except they receive this prin-

the paſſage, appears from what follows, *and* or *for he bore the ſins of many*, as *Junius* and *Tremellius* render it; which could be no reaſon with men for ſo numbering him, who knew nothing of his bearing the ſins of others; but is a reaſon with the Lord ſo to account him, ſince he himſelf laid theſe ſins on him.

ciple we are now upon, namely, that the iniquity itſelf of his people is laid upon the back of Chriſt. What, will ſome ſay, what no iniquity at all found in *Iſrael*, tho' it be ſearched for narrowly? No, ſaith the prophet, *The iniquity of* Iſrael *ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none. Iſrael* commits ſins every day, you will ſay, and cannot the Lord find them? But the prophet ſaith, he hath laid this iniquity upon Chriſt, therefore it is gone, it cannot be there, and here too; it cannot be on *Iſrael* and on Chriſt. Suppoſe a thief had ſtolen goods, and brought them home to his houſe, a friend comes and takes them away, in favour to ſave his life; there is a privy ſearch made for them in the houſe of the thief, in every corner; how can they find theſe ſtolen goods there, ſuppoſing they are carried away by his friend? They are ſought for, but they are not found, becauſe they are carried away. Even ſo, hence it is, that iniquities are ſought for in *Iſrael*, and there is none, becauſe they are carried away already, and laid upon Chriſt. I will tell you by the way, the reaſon why believers groan ſo heavily under ſuch bitterneſs of ſpirit, diſquietneſs and horror in their conſciences; they think they find their tranſgreſſions there, and imagine that there is a ſting of this poiſon ſtill behind wounding them; but, beloved, if this be received for a truth, that God hath laid thy iniquities on Chriſt, how can they, belonging to him, be found in thy heart and conſcience, if ſo be he hath already transferred them unto him.

Is thy conſcience Chriſt? Either that muſt be Chriſt, or the Lord hath not laid thine iniquities upon him; or elſe thy heart muſt be freed from thy

thy ſin. I beſeech you conſider of it ſeriouſly; we know not what times are growing upon us, nor what may abide us; we may be cut off from the land of the living, and be in the *Jews* condition, ſubject to bondage all our lives long, thro' fear of death, and hell; and what is the occaſion and ground of it? it is to have ſin lie cloſe upon your ſpirits: ſeparate ſin from the ſoul, and it hath reſt in the worſt condition: being in the *Jewiſh* condition you will never have full ſatisfaction and ſettled quiet of ſpirit, in reſpect of ſin, till you have received this principle, *That it is iniquity itſelf that the Lord hath laid on Chriſt.* Now, when I ſay with the prophet, it is that itſelf that the Lord hath laid on him, I mean as he doth; it is the fault of the tranſgreſſion itſelf, and to ſpeak more fully, that very erring and ſtraying like ſheep [1], is paſſed off from thee, and is laid upon Chriſt: to ſpeak it more plainly, haſt thou been an idolater, a blaſphemer, a deſpiſer of God's word? a trampler upon him, a prophaner of his name and ordinances, a deſpiſer of government, and of thy parents, a murderer, an adulterer, a thief, a liar, a drunkard? Reckon up what thou canſt

[1] The ſin-offering, which was typical of Chriſt, is called חטאה *ſin* itſelf, erring, going aſtray, or miſſing the mark, as the word ſignifies. See Mr. *Samuel Criſp*'s (the Dr's ſon) *Chriſt made ſin*, &c. not the guilt and puniſhment of ſin, but the ανομια, the illegality and ſinfulneſs of it were laid on Chriſt, and ſatisfied for by him: ſtrip ſin of this, and it will be an innocent thing, and deſerve no puniſhment; nor could more be inflicted on Chriſt than in proportion to ſin, or what of ſin was laid upon him; and if there is any thing in it, or belongs to it, not bore by him, it muſt be bore by the ſinner himſelf, and upon this ſcheme not one of *Adam*'s race can be ſaved.

canſt againſt thyſelf; if thou haſt part in the Lord Chriſt, all theſe tranſgreſſions of thine become actually his, and ceaſe to be thine; and thou ceaſeſt to be a tranſgreſſor, from that time they were laid upon him, to the laſt hour of thy life [m]: ſo that now thou art not an idolater, a perſecutor, a thief, a murderer, an adulterer, or a ſinful perſon; reckon what ſin ſoever you commit, when as you have part in Chriſt, you are all that he was, he is all that you were: 2 *Cor.* v. 21. *He was made ſin for us, that knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* Mark it well, Chriſt himſelf is not ſo compleatly righteous, but we are as righteous as he was; nor we ſo compleatly ſinful, but he became, being made ſin, as compleatly ſinful as we [n]; nay more, the righteouſneſs that Chriſt hath with the Father, we are the ſame, for *we are made the righteouſneſs of God*; and that very ſinfulneſs that we were, Chriſt is made before God; ſo that here is a direct change, Chriſt takes

[m] Being Chriſt's by imputation; and though theirs by commiſſion, and not Chriſt's, yet, being bore by him, ſhall not be reckoned to them, or charged upon them, or brought againſt them to their condemnation. See note p. 12, 13.

[n] But by imputation: Chriſt having all the ſins of his people laid upon him, muſt, in this ſenſe, be reckoned as completely ſinful as they; and they, having his righteouſneſs put on them, muſt be as completely righteous as he; which is to be underſtood, not of his eſſential righteouſneſs as God, nor of the righteouſneſs of his office as mediator, and the faithful diſcharge of that; for they are neither made gods nor mediators; but of that which he wrought out for them, in their room and ſtead, conſiſting of his active and paſſive obedience; "of which, ſays *Witſius*, ſeeing all the elect equally partake, all muſt needs be perfectly righteous, through the ſame moſt perfect righteouſneſs of Chriſt, *æque ac ipſe Chriſtus, equally as Chriſt himſelf*; ſince the righteouſneſs of the elect is the very righteouſneſs of Chriſt itſelf, only with this difference, that it is Chriſt's, becauſe performed by him; ours, becauſe imputed to us." *Animadv. Irenic.* c. vi. ſ. 9.

takes our perſons and condition, and ſtands in our ſtead, we take his perſon and condition, and ſtand in his ſtead.* What the Lord beheld Chriſt to be, that he beholds his members to be; what he beholds them to be in themſelves, that he beholds Chriſt himſelf to be.

So that if you would ſpeak of a ſinner, ſuppoſing him a member of Chriſt, you muſt not ſpeak of what he manifeſts, but of what Chriſt was.

If you would ſpeak of one compleatly righteous, you muſt ſpeak of him, and know that Chriſt himſelf is not more righteous than he is; and that that perſon is not more ſinful than Chriſt was, when he took his ſins on him; ſo that if you will reckon well, beloved, you muſt always reckon yourſelf in another's perſon, and that other in yours; and until the Lord find out tranſgreſſions of Chriſt's own acting, he will never find one to charge upon you.

Now, we have it profeſſed unto us, that *Chriſt was in all things like unto us, ſin only excepted*; and for whatever ſin you have committed, do, or ſhall commit, there was one ſacrifice once offered by Chriſt, through which he hath perfected them that are ſanctified; that ſacrifice of his made the exchange, by virtue of which, we became that which Chriſt was, and he became that which we were; thus the Lord laid iniquity upon him; therefore it is obſervable, the words in the text are indefinitely ſpoken, *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity*; not this or that iniquity, but the whole bulk of it.

And if this ſeem not enough, that every tranſgreſſion firſt and laſt, great and ſmall, one with another, are carried away at once, and laid upon

* See the note in page 298.

Chriſt;

Chriſt; mark that well, in 1 *John* i. 7. it is as clear as the light: *For the blood of Jeſus Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from all ſin.* [*All*] it is an admirable word though it be never ſo ſmall; not paſt ſins only, but preſent ſins; the perſon that belongs to Chriſt is acquit of all tranſgreſſions, that whatever he commits, it is as if he never committed any in the world.

1. As for that objection about guilt, that the Lord lays the guilt and puniſhment, but not ſimply the ſin itſelf, for ought that I ſee, it is a ſimple one; for, you ſhall never find this diſtinction in all the ſcripture, that God laid the guilt of ſin upon Chriſt, and not that itſelf; as for the guilt of ſin, it is not mentioned in all the ſcripture, that God lays it, or that Chriſt bears it; nay further, to affirm, that the Lord laid upon Chriſt the guilt of ſin, and not the ſin itſelf, is directly contrary to ſcripture; for you have many teſtimonies affirming, that the Lord lays ſin upon him; what preſumption then is it for a man to ſay, he lays on Chriſt the guilt, and not the ſin itſelf!

2. That you may have a little more light concerning this word guilt; for I know many ſpirits are troubled about it: for my part, I do not think as ſome do, that guilt differs from ſin, as that which is an obligation or a binding over to the puniſhment of ſin, rather than ſin itſelf being paſt and gone: but that you may have the true nature of it opened, I will give you an Inſtance, *Gen.* xliv. 21. When *Joſeph*'s brethren were accuſed for ſpies, it is ſaid, they ſpake one to another, *We are guilty concerning our brother, in that we ſaw the*

the anguiſh of his ſoul, when he beſought us, and we would not hear. What is the meaning of *guilty* here? *Reuben* expounds it in verſe 22. *Did not I ſay to you, ſin not againſt the lad? but you would not hearken unto me*, and therefore behold we are *guilty:* what is that? we ſinned againſt the child; to be guilty, therefore, and to commit ſin, is all one; they are but two words expreſſing the ſame thing: now that you may underſtand the word *guilt* better, ſuppoſe a malefactor be aſked, guilty or not guilty? he anſwers, not guilty; what doth he mean? he means he hath not done that fact which was laid to his charge: when the jury is aſked guilty or not guilty? The jury ſaith, guilty; what do they mean? Do they mean any thing in reſpect of puniſhment? No; the jury hath nothing to do with that, but only with matter of fact; that is, whether the fact be done or not; ſo that to be guilty or not guilty, is to ſay the fact is done or not; guilt and ſin are all one: where lies the difference? The guilt is upon Chriſt, but the ſin itſelf is laid upon a man's own perſon; as much as to ſay, ſin is laid upon Chriſt, but it is not laid upon him, that is juſt a contradiction: and whereas it is affirmed by ſome, that the Lord laid the puniſhment of ſin on Chriſt, and not the ſin, that is falſe; though it be true that he was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, yet it doth not follow that he did not bear them; that ſcripture that warrants us that the puniſhment was laid upon Chriſt, warrants us, that ſin itſelf was laid upon him: why do we believe that the puniſhment was laid upon Chriſt, but becauſe the Holy Ghoſt hath revealed it unto us? The ſame

hath

hath revealed to us, that ſin itſelf is laid upon him, as well as the puniſhment; he that rejects the one, rejects the other.

But, to ſum up all, beloved; the truth is, ſatan is very cunning, and, for a while, allows Chriſt the bearing of the guilt and puniſhment, that ſo he may take away his bearing iniquity; the truth is, if iniquity be not really transferred to Chriſt, there is neither the guilt nor the puniſhment of our ſins upon him. And obſerve theſe three things,

(1.) If iniquity itſelf had not been laid upon Chriſt, it had been the extremeſt injuſtice in the world for the Lord to have bruiſed him. That it was the Lord's own act, beſides the *Jews*, is manifeſt; the apoſtles jointly concluded that they did nothing but what was by the determinate counſel and purpoſe of God; nay, in this liii. of *Iſaiah*, the Holy Ghoſt ſaith expreſsly, *It pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him*; well, then, the act of bruiſing is God's; if he himſelf will bruiſe his Son, he hath ſome reaſon for it; vindictive juſtice on a perſon, of neceſſity, implies ſome fault committed. The Lord complaineth of his own people, that they ſhould ſay, *The fathers have eaten ſower grapes, and the childrens teeth are ſet on edge*; that is, men ſhould be puniſhed without fault; how could the Father poſſibly thus ſcourge his own Son, and yet have nothing to lay to his charge? He doth not acquit him from any ſin of his own; *He did no violence* at all: if, therefore, Chriſt had not the faults of his own members become his; and, that the Lord did thus bruiſe him, as having theſe upon him, he had been bruiſed for nothing.

Suppoſe a man ſhould be caſt into goal and arraigned,

raigned, and, tho' there be nothing found againſt him, yet the judge will hang him; what juſtice is there in this? Beloved, if our ſins be not tranſferred to Chriſt, and found upon him at the arraignment of God, he ſhould have been found compleat and abſolutely innocent; and then, for the Lord to puniſh him, when he had nothing to lay to his charge, had been injuſtice in him. That God, therefore, might be juſt in puniſhing Chriſt, and do no more upon him than what was deſerved, he muſt firſt have the iniquity laid upon him, that is, the merit of that bruiſing; that there might be upon him the deſert of what he did ſuſtain.

(2.) Suppoſe Chriſt be bruiſed, and our iniquities not laid to his charge, what are we the better for it? Suppoſe a man dies for a fault, what is this to a thief whoſe fault he doth not bear in his ſuffering? He muſt ſuffer for his own fault, 'till it be laid upon the perſon of another; and being laid upon him, this other ſuffers for him. Suppoſe a man be caſt into priſon for debt, and another after him; what is the caſting in of the ſecond, to the firſt, except it be as a ſurety to the firſt; then, indeed, the firſt may be acquitted by the impriſonment of the ſecond; but if the ſecond doth not lie in for the debt of the firſt, the firſt muſt ſuffer, as if the ſecond had not ſuffered at all; Chriſt was wounded and bruiſed; what is that to the perſon whoſe iniquities he doth not bear?

If Chriſt did not ſuffer for your tranſgreſſions, what is that to you if he ſuffered ten times more than he did? The truth is, beloved, juſtice, as a blood-hound, follows the ſcent of blood, and ſeizes wherever it finds it. If a deer-ſtealer ſhall caſt

caſt off his garment of blood, and another, that did not ſteal, ſhould take it on, the blood-hound would faſten upon him that is not the thief; but, if the thief himſelf bears the blood of his own garment, the blood-hound will faſten on him: and ſo will juſtice do; if Chriſt doth not take our ſins upon himſelf, juſtice will purſue us, that have our blood upon ourſelves, and ſo conſequently give us up to wrath: but, if Chriſt take our blood, juſtice will follow him, and ſeize upon him, as if he had been the very perſon acting the ſin. If juſtice do not find the blood upon him, it never purſues him, but it purſues the perſon where this blood remains; it will faſten wherever it finds it.

(3.) Whence ſhould it be, in reſpect of the event, that the elect and reprobate differ one from the other? The difference lies in this, the elect ſhall be ſaved, and the reprobate ſhall be damned; the immediate cauſe is this, the reprobate bears his own ſin, by reaſon of which he bears his enſuing damnation; the elect perſon bears not his own ſin, and ſo there is nothing found againſt him, for which he ſhould be damned. Now, ſuppoſe that Chriſt leaves iniquity ſtill remaining upon him that is elected, and the ſin be found upon him, as well as upon a reprobate, ſin would bring the ſame deſert that it doth upon the reprobate. The firſt beginning of the difference is in this, Chriſt takes away the ſins of the one, and leaves the ſins upon the other ſtill, and they bear the puniſhment in this and in the world to come. But, as for the elect, the Lord takes the iniquities of them, and tranſlates them upon Chriſt, who, in that regard, bears all the wrath due to them for them; and ſo they become

become diſcharged from puniſhment, both in this life and in the life to come. The truth is, wherever ſin is, the juſtice of God will have plenary ſatisfaction, even for all the ſins in the world, either by the ſinner himſelf, or by ſome ſurety for him; Chriſt, ſeeing he hath taken the ſins of the elect upon him, muſt pay the full value; and his pay muſt be as full as the reprobates in hell; for God will have the utmoſt farthing. This is the difference between an elect perſon, and a reprobate; Chriſt firſt paid all that for them, which they, with the reprobate, ſhould otherwiſe have paid, in their own perſons, in hell; and, therefore, you can conceive no real difference between them and you, if Chriſt doth not bear your ſins upon himſelf.

A word of application, and ſo I will have done; and that ſhall be but one. If it be iniquity itſelf that is laid upon Chriſt, then, beloved, ſee what cauſe you have to take up all your time to be his; that being his, and receiving the grace of God adminiſtered unto you by him, you may ſee what cauſe you have to take up the triumph of the apoſtle; *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that juſtifieth.* It is a ſweet ſong, beloved, and a ſong of ſongs indeed, and there is mighty ſtrength in the argument: here is firſt a queſtion, *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* Who is it? Some will ſay, It is God, I fear; I fear not men, they cannot do it; I fear God will lay ſomething to my charge: if there be ſin, it is againſt him; if there be any wrath, it is he that muſt pour it out: all that I fear is God. Nay, fear not, ſaith the apoſtle, *It*

is God that juſtifieth; therefore never fear that he will lay any thing to thy charge. Can God ſay, I pronounce thee innocent, and juſtify thee from thy ſin; and will he, with the ſame breath ſay, I have this and that other ſin to lay to thy charge? This were a contradiction. If any man in the world will offer to do it, they have nothing to do in this work; it is God, and he only charges with ſin; and if he doth it not, who can do it? Nay, *Chriſt is dead, nay rather is riſen again*; as if he ſhould have ſaid, The Lord laid our iniquities upon him; he made him to bear the burthen of all, and it ſunk him to death, and he was caſt into the gaol for the debt; now we ſee him come out. Seeing God is ſo exact that he will have the utmoſt farthing, it is certain he is quit, becauſe he is delivered; he is freed, *He is not dead, but is riſen.* Oh! beloved, how comfortably might you walk in all conditions in the world, if you did but carry this in your breaſt! Well, come what will, I am quit of all my ſins, I ſtand innocent; for Chriſt himſelf hath ſatisfied the Father to the full for them, and he will never remember them again.

Mark but one paſſage of ſcripture, and I will conclude, 2 *Cor.* v. 19,---21. *God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them, and made him to be ſin for us.* Mark, in the buſineſs of transferring ſin to Chriſt, God's order; when he will do all with Chriſt for men's ſins, he gives to them a full acquittance; he cancels his bonds, ſo that he will have nothing in the world to ſhew againſt him, ſo it imports: as for the world (men) *God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes*

unto

unto them ; that is, he will not have a word more to ſay to them ; he will not have a ſin more to charge upon them ; but, as for Chriſt, he ſhall be made ſin ; that is the reaſon why God gives men a diſcharge, becauſe he hath found out one that is mighty to bear it, as you have it in *Pſal.* lxxxix. 19. *Thou ſpakeſt in viſion to thy Holy One, I have laid help upon one that is mighty :* as if he ſhould have ſaid to Chriſt, I have a company of broken creatures ; for a debt that is owing me I could puniſh them for-ever, but I ſhould never pay myſelf out of them ; now I have found thee, a perſon able to pay ; and, ſeeing I have found thee ſo, I will take it here : I will pay myſelf out of thee.

In *Heb.* vii. 22. you have a notable expreſſion of Chriſt ; *Wherefore*, (ſaith the apoſtle) *he is the ſurety of a better teſtament* : God takes Chriſt as a ſurety ; look as men will do, ſo deals God with him. A rich ſurety is bound for a broken debtor, that is not worth a groat ; what will the creditor do in this caſe ? He will never look after the beggar ; he knows there is nothing to be looked for there ; he will look after the rich man ; the rich man muſt ſtand to it ; let him look to it, he ſhall pay it : ſo doth God ; Chriſt is become the ſurety of a better covenant ; man is a broken debtor, and Chriſt is a ſurety, one that is rich, and able to pay, therefore God will look after none but him ; for this cauſe Chriſt gives his own ſingle bond, and God is content to take it, and looks for no other paymaſter but him. You know, when a ſurety becomes bound, inſtead of the principal, the ſurety is as much the principal, after he is bound, as the principal was the debtor before : ſo Chriſt, being

a ſurety, not only ſtands liable to the payment of the debt, but he actually ſtands the debtor, upon which ground the payment may be exacted: for, except the perſon be a debtor, there can be no juſt claim of payment; therefore the ſurety is a real debtor; nay, Chriſt being our ſurety, is become ſole debtor; God hath not only taken him to be ſurety, but, upon Chriſt's coming and giving his bond, he cancels the bond, that now we are as free as if we never had been bound.

SERMON XVIII.

Sin tranſacted really upon Chriſt.

ISAIAH liii. 6.

And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

I Entered upon theſe words, not far from hence, the laſt Lord's day; and, becauſe ſome deſired further light in the truth contained in them, I thought it not amiſs to communicate ſomething more, that light may ſhine forth from them.

The whole chapter ſets out Chriſt abundantly, with raviſhing ſweetneſs: in this text, and the verſe before it, is contained the ſum of the whole goſpel of Chriſt, the fountain of all the glad tidings publiſhed to the ſons of men. Here the Holy Ghoſt tells

tells us, how God diſpoſes of our ſins, then of the deſert of them, and what the fruit of this diſpoſing is; *He laid the iniquities of us all upon him*; *He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions.* The fruit is, 1. Peace by his chaſtiſement. 2. Healing by his ſtripes. The words of the text are ſo many propoſitions or doctrines; there are theſe particulars contained in them:

1. What it is the Lord laid on Chriſt, *Iniquity.* 2. How the Lord diſpoſes of it, *He laid it on him.* 3. Whoſe iniquities he lays on him, *The iniquities of us all*, ſuch as have gone aſtray. 4. When he laid them on him, the thing is paſt, *He hath laid*, it is already done. We have conſidered the *firſt* of theſe particulars, *That it is iniquity itſelf that the Lord laid upon Chriſt*; not barely puniſhment, leaving iniquity behind; but iniquity itſelf is laid upon him. I cannot ſtand to repeat all particularly; I will, therefore, fall at once upon the *ſecond* thing, *viz.* How the Lord diſpoſes of this iniquity, *The Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all upon him*; let that be the propoſition, putting the emphaſis upon the word *laid.* If ever there be joy, peace, and reſt of ſpirit, or thou wilt be of good chear, as having knowledge of thy ſins being forgiven, it muſt be fetched out of this, *The Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all upon Chriſt.* Men may ſuppoſe comfort and joy, and, in the ſtrength of their fancy, peradventure, be at ſome kind of reſt out of ſome other apprehenſions; but there is no ſolid reſt to any, but as it is founded on this, that iniquity is laid upon Chriſt. Satan knows this well enough, and therefore he raiſeth a cloud of duſt (as I may ſo ſay) to obſcure the glorious light of

the ſun of righteouſneſs ſhining forth in this truth: there is ſuch a ſtir to ſhift off the plain genuine meaning of the Holy Ghoſt, that the truth is, perſons ſcarce know where to find reſt for the ſole of their feet, in reſpect of peace, thro' the forgiveneſs of ſins. And indeed, beloved, as the covenant of God is peculiar only to thoſe that ſhall partake of the fulneſs of Chriſt; ſo none ſhall truly and thoroughly underſtand ſuch truths as theſe, but thoſe that are taught of God himſelf; which is one branch of the covenant, *They ſhall be all taught of* me.

That we may the better underſtand what evangelical ſweetneſs is wrapped up in this truth, let us a little conſider, what this phraſe imports, according to the true meaning of the Holy Ghoſt. A great deal of ſhuffling there is about it, that the ſpirits of men can hardly receive it, or take it in plain *Engliſh*, *That iniquity is laid upon Chriſt:* by it, men generally conceive a kind of connivance of God; as if the Lord took notice, that this, and that, and the other perſon indeed bear tranſgreſſion, but he forbears him, and will for the preſent ſuppoſe, that it is upon Chriſt; and ſo by laying its iniquity upon him, it muſt be no more, but God will be contented to eſteem and think, iniquity is upon him; while indeed, and in truth, it remains where it was, upon the man himſelf that committed it.

But, beloved, under favour, I muſt be bold to tell you, that while men ſeek to vindicate God one way in this kind, they extremely abuſe him in another; for if this be truth, that God only counts or ſuppoſes iniquity upon Chriſt, whilſt he knows well

well enough, it is yet upon this, and that perſon, and he himſelf bears it; mark what will follow; what will you call this eſteem of God? Is it ſuch an eſteem and ſuppoſition, that is righteous or falſe? Suppoſe a man ſpeak of things, not according to the truth of the nature of the thing, but it is otherwiſe than he ſpeaks of it; in this caſe, I would know whether ſuch a ſpeech be true or falſe: the truth of ſpeech depends upon this, when that, and the thing whereof it is made, do agree together; if they agree, the ſpeech is true; if it tends one way, and the thing itſelf another, it is falſe: now then ſpeeches are true or falſe, according to the truth of the thing ſpoken of; ſo are the thoughts and ſuppoſitions of the mind; for all theſe are but the work, or ſpeech of it; therefore if the mind think of things, and theſe be otherwiſe, is it a true or falſe thought? a true one it cannot be, becauſe it is not conſonant to the thing thought of, ſo there is a miſtake: but further, ſuppoſe a man know certainly before-hand, a thing is otherwiſe than he ſpeaks, or than he thinks it to be, what call you this? This muſt be more than ſimply or barely a falſhood; in common acceptation this is no better than a lie; a man knows that a thing is thus and thus, yet he ſaith it is otherwiſe: ſuppoſe, I know a man is in ſuch a place, and I will think him in another, what is this better than a lie? Now to come to the point in hand, *The Lord laid iniquity upon Chriſt:* what is that? he will ſuppoſe, think, or take it for granted, that iniquity is on Chriſt, but he knows it is on the perſons themſelves ſtill; ſee how God muſt be charged by men that run into ſuch a ſtrain

as this; at the beſt they charge him with miſtakes; for if he knows that the ſins of men remain ſtill upon themſelves, and yet will ſuppoſe they do not, but are on Chriſt, is this ſuppoſition according to the true being of the thing or no? Certainly, beloved, that all-wiſe, all-knowing, all-ſearching God, hath no other thoughts of things than as they are; as he himſelf either makes or diſpoſes of them, he eſteems and thinks of them, ſo conſequently of ſin. If he ſays, *He lays, or hath laid, iniquity upon Chriſt*, and hath diſcharged the believer from all iniquity; certainly God ſuppoſes and eſteems things to be thus, as he hath diſpoſed of them.

Indeed, let us not make God ſo childiſh: if he laid iniquity on Chriſt, he paſt this real act upon him, and the thing is thus really, as he diſpoſes of it; and therefore, in brief, this laying iniquity upon him, is ſuch a tranſlation of ſin from thoſe, whoſe iniquity he lays upon him; that by it he now becomes, or did become, when they were laid, as really and truly the perſon that had all theſe ſins, as thoſe men who did commit them really and truly, had them themſelves; it is true, as I ſaid before, Chriſt never ſinned in all his life; *He did no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth*; but this hinders not, but that there may be on him an abſolute tranſaction; ſo that by laying iniquity on him, he becomes the ſole perſon in the behalf of all the elect, that truly hath iniquity upon him.

For the better clearing of this, give me leave to open a few expreſſions of ſcripture that ſpeak to the ſame effect, and peradventure ſome will give better light than others; obſerve, 2 *Cor.* v. 21. Having

ing ſpoken of being reconciled unto believers, he tells us, *He*, that is, Chriſt, *was made ſin for us:* here is not only ſin itſelf charged upon him, but it is expreſſed, how God charged it, *He was made ſin*; and this word made ſin, hath more in it to ſhew the reality of ſin being upon Chriſt, by way of tranſaction, than the word laid: if you read the marginal notes upon our text, you ſhall perceive how tranſlators render it; the Lord, ſaith the margent, made all our ſins to meet upon him; the text, as we read it, runs, *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all*; now what is it for a thing to be made? is it but a meer imaginary ſuppoſition or fancy? doth not the word (make) conſtitute the reality of the being of ſuch a thing that is made? If you will know what it is to be made ſin more fully, look into *Rom.* v. 19. *As by one man's diſobedience many were made ſinners, ſo by the obedience of one many are made righteous:* what is the meaning of that being made ſinners? the whole drift (as you may plainly ſee) of the apoſtle, is to compare the reſtoration of perſons by Chriſt, with the fall of them by *Adam*. It's true, men are made ſinners two ways, they are made ſinners fruitfully by *Adam*; there is not only an univerſal ſin caſt over all mankind, but there is a fruitfulneſs to commit it; but the apoſtle's drift in that place is to ſhew, that the perſonal tranſgreſſion of *Adam* in eating the forbidden fruit, became the ſin of all the men of the world, even before they themſelves did either good or evil; from whence *David* ſaith in *Pſal.* li. 5. *In ſin was I conceived*; now *David*, when he was conceived, had not himſelf perſonally ſinned, neither was ſin fruitful in him,

him, to do evil himſelf; and yet he, even then, was made ſin by the diſobedience of one: now what is this? is it merely to be ſuppoſed or imagined to have ſin? or is not there a reality of guilt, or of ſin upon men by *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion? The apoſtle ſaith expreſly, *By the diſobedience of one, many were made ſinners:* and it appears, that we are actual, that is to ſay, real ſinners, by that very ſin of his; that is, ſeparate from tranſgreſſions, in our own perſons: if then, a making perſons ſinners, conſtitute a thing really in being, and not merely in imagination; it muſt follow, that Chriſt being made ſin, or ſin being laid upon him, is a real act; God really paſſes over ſin upon him, ſtill keeping this fact, that Chriſt ſinned not; ſo that in reſpect of this act, not one ſin of the believer is Chriſt's °, but in reſpect of tranſgreſſion, the conveyance of it, or paſſing accounts from one head to another, there is a reality of making Chriſt to be ſin. When one man becomes a debtor in another's room, legally and by conſent; this ſurety that becomes the debtor, is not barely ſuppoſed to be ſo, but by undertaking it, and legally having it paſt upon him, he is as really and truly the debtor, as he was, that was the principal before: ſo that there is an abſolute truth and reality of God's act in paſſing over, and laying ſins upon Chriſt. If a judge would think ſuch a man to be a malefactor, when in his own conſcience he knows he

° This clearly ſhews the ſenſe in which the Dr. is always to be underſtood; that the ſins of believers become Chriſt's, not in reſpect of the act, as done by him, but as debts become thoſe who are ſurety for others; in which, as there is a real paſſing of debts over to them, ſo there is a real paſſing over of ſins to Chriſt.

he is not, and upon his thought that he is, will actually hang him, is there any juſtice in ſuch an act? If God will but ſuppoſe Chriſt to have ſin upon him, and knows that he hath it not, but others have it upon them; and upon this ſuppoſition will execute Chriſt, what will you call this? As I ſaid before, there muſt of neceſſity be a preſent deſert upon a perſon, before the judge can inflict any thing upon him; a fault muſt be found upon a man, before he may be executed legally and juſtly; therefore the fault muſt be found really upon Chriſt himſelf, before there can be an act of God's juſtice in wounding him.

You have another phraſe expreſſing the ſame thing, *Iſaiah* liii. 11, 12. *He ſhall bear the ſins of many:* now what is it to bear a thing? Doth a man bear a thing merely in a way of ſuppoſition? or where there is a *bearing*, is there not a real weight? This I am ſure of, where the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaks of men's *bearing their ſin*, he ſpeaks of ſuch a thing as ſhall lye heavy upon men: in *Leviticus* you have it often expreſſed, *And they ſhall bear their iniquities*; ſpeaking of perſons that ſhould be rejected and caſt off: what is this bearing, but that ſin ſhould be found upon men, having a weight which ſhall be able to cruſh, bow, and break them? *My ſoul* (ſaith Chriſt) *is heavy unto death*; and thus he ſpake before he ſuffered any real bodily pain; how came it to be heavy, if there were not ſome weight that he bore? if he did bear iniquity, and not the weight of it on him, how can his ſoul be heavy? nothing is bowed down, except there be ſome real burthen borne that ſhould do it: ſo that there muſt therefore

fore be ſin really paſt upon Chriſt, or elſe he could never ſtoop and bow, and be ſo heavy loaded as he was.

There is one phraſe more in *John* i. 29. by the the way, give me leave to tell you, that whereas it is generally received, that *John* prepared the way of Chriſt, and therefore is called his fore-runner, becauſe he went in a way of beating down and breaking in pieces; you ſhall find, I ſay, that his main buſineſs, for which he is called the preparer of the way of the Lord, was; he pointed with his finger to Chriſt, that ſo people might now ſee him whom they expected; *Behold* (ſaith he) *the Lamb of God that takes away the ſin of the world:* I ſay, this was his main buſineſs, to point out Chriſt, that people might ſee him now to be come; and for this very cauſe, he is ſaid to *prepare the way of the Lord:* what is the taking away of ſin? it is worth conſideration, beloved; it cannot ſink into the head of any reaſonable perſon, tho' he be but merely natural, that a thing ſhould be taken away, and yet be left behind; it is a flat contradiction: if a man be to receive money at ſuch a place, and he takes it away with him, is it left in the place where it was, when he hath taken it away? the Lamb of God, Chriſt, takes away the ſins of the world, and doth he leave them behind him? it is a contradiction: look *Lev.* xvi. 21, 22. where you have that moſt admirable type of all the types of Chriſt mentioned, and that is the type of the ſcape-goat; and there you will plainly perceive what it is for iniquity to be laid upon Chriſt, and how far forth it concerns the believer; *And* Aaron *ſhall lay both his hands upon the head of the live-goat,*

goat, and confeſs over him all the iniquities of the children of Iſrael, *and all their tranſgreſſions and ſins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and ſhall ſend him away into the wilderneſs, and the goat ſhall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited, and they ſhall let go the goat into the wilderneſs.* There was a goat ſlain, and a live one ſent into the wilderneſs, that is, Chriſt dying and Chriſt living: it is true, our ſins are laid upon Chriſt dying, that ſatisfied for them; but the diſcharge of our ſins, or receiving the acquittance, is from Chriſt alive, or riſen. Now as this ſcapegoat muſt have the ſins of the people laid upon the head of him, and, when laid, muſt go into the wilderneſs, and carry their ſins with him; juſt ſo doth Chriſt with the ſins of believers; God lays iniquities upon him, namely, by transferring them upon him, that he takes them away, and carries them into a land of forgetfulneſs, into the wilderneſs, a land not inhabited; that is, into a place that they ſhall not be heard of any more: therefore, the Lord, in the cloſure of the new covenant, ſhuts it up thus, *Your ſins and your iniquities will I remember no more.* How ſo? He hath carried them away into a land not inhabited; he takes them away, and, therefore, they are not left behind upon the perſon whoſe they were, till Chriſt took them away: tho' I ſay, ſtill the perſon of a believer daily, hourly, every moment, renews ſeveral acts, which, in their own nature, are ſins; they commit ſuch things that are not according to the revealed word of God; yet, Chriſt being become the *ſurety of a better teſtament*, ſtill takes off every tranſgreſſion as it ariſes; he died not for preſent

preſent and paſt ſins only, *but for the ſins of the whole world*; that is, for the ſins of perſons in the world, even to the end of it, and for them all at once; he takes and carries them away.

There are many objections, I know, ariſing in the hearts of men, yea even of believers themſelves, till they come to be more and more enlightened, againſt this reality of tranſacting ſin upon Chriſt, by which the perſon of a believer is acquitted: ſome of them are gathered out of phraſes of ſcripture; others are raiſed up from reaſon; ſome are maintained by common and natural ſenſe. I ſhall endeavour (as clearly as poſſiby I may) to anſwer thoſe of greateſt moment, that people may be ſatisfied in the truth.

Againſt ſuch reality of tranſacting ſin upon Chriſt, there is one phraſe of the apoſtle *Paul*, very much objected, and that is [*imputing*]; and hence, ſay ſome, God's laying of iniquity upon Chriſt, is nothing elſe but God's imputing ſin to him. Now this word [*imputation*] in the common underſtanding of people ordinarily, ſeems to carry ſomething different in it from the real act of transferring ſin from a believer unto Chriſt; it ſeems to ſignify only a ſuppoſition or connivance. Give me leave to open this word [*imputing*] to you; I am confident it ſtumbles many a perſon, not underſtanding the true meaning of the Holy Ghoſt in it; and I ſhall endeavour to clear it to you out of ſcripture itſelf. *Firſt*, That which I ſhall anſwer for the imputation of ſin to Chriſt, is this; tho' I have ſearched the ſcripture as narrowly as poſſibly I may, yet, this I find, that throughout the whole there is not one paſſage of it that ſpeaks of imputing

ting our ſins to Chriſt: in *Rom.* iv. the word *imputation*, and that which is equivalent to it, *accounting*, and *reckoning*, are ſeven times mentioned; and, in chap. v. 13. it is mentioned again; but ſtill where the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaks of *imputation*, he ſpeaks of ſin not imputed, and of righteouſneſs imputed to us; but not once of ſin imputed unto Chriſt [p]: ſo that if we put this objection off, as not being the phraſe of ſcripture, it might be a full anſwer.

But, ſome will ſay, there is that which is equivalent to it; for if ſin be not imputed unto us, and righteouſneſs is; as we partake of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, ſo he partakes of our ſin; we partake of his righteouſneſs by imputation, therefore he partakes of our ſin by imputation.

I will not contend about words; we will take it for granted, that it is conſonant to ſcripture, that our ſins are imputed unto Chriſt; all the difficulty lies in the true underſtanding of the word *imputation*; how ſhall we find it? Look into *Lev.* xvii. 4. that will give light into it; *What man ſoever there be of the houſe of* Iſrael, *that kills an ox*, &c. *blood ſhall be imputed unto that man, he hath ſhed blood, and*

[p] Not that the Dr. was againſt the imputation of ſin to Chriſt, or thought it an unſcriptural doctrine; for it is the very thing, under different phraſes, he is all along, in theſe diſcourſes, contending for; and he makes uſe of it himſelf, p. 16. but what he militates againſt is, as ſome people underſtood it, as if it was a thing imaginary, which was only ſuppoſed of Chriſt and not real; which ſenſe he ſets aſide, and is his view in producing the objections he does; and ſettles the true ſenſe of it by *reckoning* and *accounting*, which illuſtrates the true nature of imputation, as he after obſerves; and in which ſenſe he readily allows it, as not being oppoſite to a real act of God in transferring ſin to Chriſt; which is the thing his heart was ſet upon to prove, and to beat into the minds of men.

and that man ſhall be cut off from among his people. Now, beloved, mark what the meaning of the word imputed is; it is no more but this, as he is truly and really guilty of blood, ſo he ſhall really and truly go for a bloody man: imputation here, you ſee plainly, hath reference to the truth and reality of the thing; he hath ſhed blood, and therefore blood ſhall be imputed to him.

Again, look into 1 *Sam.* xxii. 15. where you ſhall find *Abimelech* pleading hard with *Saul*, for his own life, and for the lives of his houſhold: it ſeems *Saul* charged *Abimelech*, that he had relieved *David* with victuals and arms againſt him; for which cauſe, *Saul* calls him forth, to the end he might deſtroy him for it; now mark how *Abimelech* pleads for himſelf; *Did I then begin to inquire of God for him? be it far from me, let not the king impute any thing to his ſervant:* what is the meaning of *impute* here? Firſt, *Abimelech* acquits himſelf from being faulty in what *Saul* charged upon him; he did no ſuch thing, he was accuſed of, hereupon, ſaith he, *Let not the king impute any ſuch thing to me*; as much as to ſay, let the king determine and conclude of things according as really and truly they are: this is the meaning of the word there.

Again, look into *Rom.* v. 13. you ſhall ſee there again the word *impute*, is taken in the ſame ſenſe; the apoſtle ſaith, *But ſin is not imputed where there is no law*; now mark in chap. iv. 15. *Where there is no law, there is no tranſgreſſion*; put theſe two together, the meaning muſt be this; God imputes no ſin where he finds no law tranſgreſſed; that is, there is no ſin in being, where there

there is no law tranſgreſſed; and therefore he ſo determines and concludes of the thing. God's determining of things according as indeed they are, is his imputing things evermore.

Look into *Rom.* iv. 3, 4. There are two words that illuſtrate the nature of imputation, and they are theſe, *accounting* and *reckoning*; now enquire and underſtand the real and common uſe of theſe words, to *account* and *reckon:* ſuppoſe men are to paſs an account, for that is the proper meaning of the word; to *account*, is to paſs an account; and, upon the ballance, there is ſo much money accounted to ſuch a man; what is the meaning of it? Is it not that there is really ſo much money due to this man? And ſo, for the word *reckoning*, what is that? You know how ordinary it is for men to reckon together; for accounting and reckoning are all one. Men caſt up their accounts, and, upon the caſting of them up, they find this and that due; that is, they reckon that ſuch a man oweth ſo much: ſo that underſtanding the courſe of ſcripture, and the common uſe of the phraſes of *reckoning* and *accounting*; you ſhall find that *imputing* is nothing but God's determination and concluſion that he paſſes upon things, as really and truly they are, without imagining things to be ſo and ſo, when indeed, and in truth, they are not ſo.

There is a ſecond paſſage of ſcripture that is much objected, againſt this reality of God's paſſing ſin upon Chriſt, that is in *Rom.* iv. 17. and, indeed, at firſt glance, it ſeems to carry ſome ſtrength with it, that there is not a reality in the thing, but that God is contented to account it ſo; *He calleth thoſe things that be not, as though they were.* Some

may ſuppoſe, that the Holy Ghoſt here imports to us, that it may well ſtand with God, tho' ſins are not indeed upon Chriſt, yet to call them ſo, as if they were upon him.

But, beloved, give me leave to give you the true ſcope of the apoſtle in this place; and you ſhall plainly perceive, that this is broken ſenſe, wholly torn away from his true meaning in it: mark it well, I pray; the apoſtle, in the beginning of this chapter, tells us of God's promiſe made to *Abraham*, recited *Gen.* xvii. 5. *I have made thee a father of many nations.* Now, becauſe this promiſe was ſpoken before *Abraham* actually had children, and, when his body was dead in a manner, and ſo was not; hereupon he takes upon him to commend the faith of *Abraham*, that he ſhould build upon the word of God, when there was ſo little likelihood of the thing; it was all one as if it were not at all; and he ſhews the ground whereupon he built with ſo much confidence, even the power of God, that makes things that are not, when he hath ſaid the word, to be. So that the meaning of the place, is only this, tho' *Abraham* was not, that is, he was dead unto fruitfulneſs, yet the Lord having ſaid, he would make him *a father of many nations*, calls him as fruitful a perſon as he that was moſt ſo, tho' for the preſent he was not; ſo that, for the meaning of it, the utmoſt that can be made is this, that God, in reſpect of his power to bring to paſs, when he ſaith the word, will call things as if they were preſent in being, when they are not, but in time ſhall be.

But what is this to the preſent purpoſe, if God did not really transfer ſin to Chriſt, nor never meant

meant to do it? For if he hath not done it already, he never will; I ſay, if he neither hath nor will, how doth this place prove that *he calls things that are not, as tho' they were?* This is certain, beloved, tho' all things that ever ſhall be in the world, are moſt preſent to the Lord at once; for ſo they may be ſaid to be, in reſpect of him, tho', as to the things themſelves, they yet are not; yet, in all the ſcripture, you ſhall never find the Lord expreſſing himſelf ſo; he never calls things thus and thus, when they never are, nor never ſhall be. If Chriſt has not already borne the ſins of men himſelf, then certainly he never ſhall; for he is not now to do any more, to compaſs any thing not compaſſed; and if neither heretofore ſin hath been, nor hereafter ſhall be, laid upon him, how can God call that which was not, nor never ſhall be, as if it were?

There is, therefore, beloved, a certain tranſacting of ſin upon Chriſt, ſo real, that, indeed, the believer, tho' an actor of tranſgreſſion, is as abſolutely and truly diſcharged of his ſins, as if he himſelf had not committed them. As a debtor, when a ſurety hath taken the debt on him, and the debtor receives an acquittance, he is as free of the debt as if he had never run into it: ſo, I ſay, it is with believers, Chriſt being made *a ſurety of a better teſtament*; and, thereby becoming really and truly the debtor inſtead of them; he ſo bears all the debt himſelf, that they are altogether releaſed and diſcharged, as if they had never been in debt. Still, I ſay, this hinders not, but that there is committing of ſin every day by the believer; but yet the vertue of Chriſt's ſuretyſhip takes it

off as ſoon as ever it is committed; nay, he hath a *proviſo*, a ſtock in bank to ſatisfy for it before the commiſſion of it.

Now, beloved, as there are many ſtrong objections out of many paſſages of ſcripture; ſo, likewiſe, are there many ſtrong ones, as many conceive, from natural ſenſe and reaſon; which, yet, being well weighed and conſidered, will vaniſh into ſmoke. I could willingly go on to anſwer theſe, but the time at preſent will not permit.

SERMON XIX.

Sin tranſacted really upon Chriſt.

ISAIAH liii. 6.

And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

I Have elſewhere (as ſome of you know) entered upon theſe words, which afford divers notable, ſweet, ſoul-refreſhing truths; every word having its weight. 1. It was iniquity that the Lord laid upon Chriſt. 2. The Lord hath laid this upon him. This *laying* of our iniquity upon Chriſt, carries a deal of life in it; it weighs down the ſcale by which we mount. Now, by laying iniquity, the Holy Ghoſt means plainly ſuch a taking away, and bearing of it by Chriſt, that the believer, whoſe iniquity he bears, is wholly diſcharged of it, as if he had never committed any

any at all. This laying of iniquity is not a mere ſuppoſition of God, that Chriſt now bears ſin, while the believer in deed and truth bears it himſelf; but it is ſuch a real act of God transferring the ſin of a believer from him unto Chriſt, as when a ſurety ſtands in the room of a debtor, the debtor is by this accquitted of the debt, and the ſurety is as really the debtor now, as the debtor himſelf was before. It is true, where principal and ſurety are in a joint-bond, the debtor lies open as well as the ſurety, and the ſurety as the debtor; but if the ſurety will come into the room of the debtor, he is ſo become the debtor, that the principal is now as free as if he had owed nothing. I uſe it as a demonſtration, becauſe it is the apoſtle's own, *He is made the ſurety of a better teſtament.* I cannot inſiſt at large upon what I have formerly delivered; the ſum is this, God made him to be ſin, not only by way of ſuppoſition, but really; he bore the iniquities of many; he took away the ſins of the believer; in all which there is a real act. And, whereas it is objected, that this word *laying* is expreſſed by the phraſe of *imputing*, I anſwer, that it is not true; for, tho' the word *impute* is often uſed in reference to us, yet never in reference to Chriſt; *Righteouſneſs is imputed to us*; *our ſins are not imputed unto us*, ſaith the apoſtle; but, in all the ſcripture, you ſhall not find ſin imputed unto Chriſt; and, if ſin be imputed unto him, it is no more but God's determining and judging Chriſt to bear ſin, as in deed and in truth he doth bear it. But I muſt haſten.

I find, beloved, that there is nothing that embitters the life of a poor tender ſoul ſo much as

this one thing, that they bear ſtill their own iniquities, which lie heavy upon them; and I think that there cannot be a better ſervice done to the poor weak members of Chriſt, than to ſhew them how they are wholly eaſed of this moſt unſupportable burthen of their ſins. Satan knows, that now there is no other yoke of bondage to keep believers under, than to hold them under this principle, that their ſins are not really already laid upon Chriſt, but that they themſelves muſt bear ſome of them. I know the objections are very many, and, at firſt ſight, ſeem to be very ſtrong; we will ſee how we can take them away.

Natural reaſon, I know, pleads mightily againſt laying iniquity upon Chriſt, taken really and properly.

1. It is againſt juſtice, ſaith reaſon, that Chriſt, being innocent, ſhould be charged with ſin; as unjuſt as if you ſhould take a true honeſt man, and charge him with felony, and execute him for it.

I anſwer, It is no injuſtice to charge iniquity upon Chriſt, tho' he be innocent, not only becauſe the ſcripture ſaith expreſsly, *That the Lord did lay iniquity upon him*, tho' he never did violence himſelf, which is enough to ſatisfy any that will be ruled by ſcripture; but, I ſay, in reaſon itſelf, it is not injuſtice, tho' Chriſt be innocent, that yet he ſhould bear iniquity: it is true, if God ſhould take Chriſt, and force him to bear it, whether he would or no, it were injuſtice indeed; but Chriſt willingly offers himſelf to bear it, that God may have ſatisfaction, and a poor creature may have relief; he being thus willing to take it upon himſelf,

himſelf, it is no injuſtice in God to lay it upon him: obſerve it in reaſon, and it is not injuſtice; you have nothing in the world more common than this; ſuppoſe a man oweth an hundred pounds, if the creditor come to another man (ſuppoſe a father) and demand payment, and arreſt him for it, and make him pay it, this is injuſtice indeed; but if a father come to a creditor, and ſay, my ſon is a broken man, he can pay nothing, I am rich and able to pay all, lay your debt upon me, I will undertake it; upon ſuch a tender, is it injuſtice for the creditor now to charge the debt upon the father that thus offers himſelf? There is nothing more common, it is an uſual thing for a man to ſeal bonds for his friend, tho' the debt be not his own till he hath ſealed, yet then he is as truly the debtor as he that had the money; and ſo when the time of payment comes, the money is demanded of him, and lawfully charged upon him, becauſe he hath made himſelf the debtor: ſo God the Father doth not take Chriſt as a rich man, to pay whether he will or no, but upon a joint agreement between them, Chriſt being contented, God takes him for a ſurety: *In the volume of the book it is written of me*, Heb. x. 7, 9. *that I ſhould do thy will, O God: I am content*, ſaith Chriſt, *Lo, I come, to do thy will, O God:* here was, I ſay, a joint agreement; and ſeeing Chriſt agrees to it, where is now the injuſtice, that the *Lord ſhould lay iniquity upon him*, when for his ſatisfaction, Chriſt was contented to do it? The apoſtle tells us, that it was not poſſible that thoſe gifts and ſacrifices that were offered before of the *Jews*, could make thoſe that did the ſervice perfect, in *Heb.* ix. 9.

Seeing then there was no other way to ſatisfy God, but Chriſt's own coming, and that he might be ſatisfied he would come, and freely tender himſelf, there was no injuſtice that he ſhould have *iniquity laid upon him*, when he was content to bear it.

2. It is further objected; ſaith reaſon, it is a contradiction to ſay, Chriſt is innocent, and yet bears iniquity. Innocence is nothing but full freedom from all crime and fault; how can Chriſt be ſaid to be innocent, and yet to have fault upon him? it is a contradiction in reaſon.

I anſwer, it is no contradiction to ſay that Chriſt is innocent, and yet bears fault, being laid upon him: it is true, if theſe propoſitions were affirmed in every reſpect alike, it were a contradiction indeed; but it is commonly known, thoſe things that are in their own nature contradictory, yet if they be ſpoken of in divers reſpects, are not ſo; Chriſt is innocent in reſpect of his own perſonal act; he bears fault as he ſtands a common perſon: Chriſt therefore is conſidered two ways. 1. Perſonally. 2. Repreſentatively, as a common perſon. In reſpect of his own perſon, he is innocent; as he is a common perſon, he bears the fault of many.

3. Yet further, iniquity cannot be laid upon Chriſt, ſaith reaſon; for if he ſhould really bear iniquity, he himſelf, for it, muſt be ſeparated from God; and if ſo, how can he make thoſe that were ſometimes afar off, near? The prophet ſaith, *Your iniquities have ſeparated between you and your God*; was Chriſt ſeparated from God, will you ſay? if he were not, how could he bear iniquity.

I anſwer, this objection makes it moſt manifeſt, that Chriſt did really bear iniquity, in that it is the cauſe of ſeparation from God; it is certainly true, wherever iniquity is, it ſeparates; nay, from this I affirm, as Chriſt did bear it, ſo for that he was ſeparated from God; this peradventure will need ſome ſtrong proof, therefore you ſhall have the ſtrongeſt that can be given for the demonſtration of it: that Chriſt was ſeparated from God, it is his own teſtimony, and juſt at that inſtant, when ſin lay heavy upon him; I pray conſtrue well thoſe words of Chriſt, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* What do you call this forſaking here? was it not a ſeparation between God and him? When friends, after they have gone hand in hand together, the one forſakes the other, what is that? he ſeparates himſelf from him. God was here ſeparated from Chriſt, or elſe Chriſt ſpeaks untruth, for he complains and cries out, in the bitterneſs of his ſpirit; *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?*

You will ſay, it may be this forſaking was but for a little moment.

To this I anſwer, It was as long as ſin was upon him; had not Chriſt breathed out the ſins of men that were upon him, he had never ſeen God again; he having taken ſin upon him, he muſt firſt unload himſelf of it, before he can be brought near to God: therefore, beloved, you ſhall find that paſſage of the Pſalmiſt, *Thou art my ſon, this day have I begotten thee*, is expounded by the apoſtle of the reſurrection of Chriſt; as if the Lord did then beget his ſon anew, as it were. There was a ſeparation and a forſaking when Chriſt died,

but

but at his riſing there was a meeting again, a kind of renewing of his ſonſhip with God [q], *This day have I begotten thee*; therefore in *Rom.* viii. 34. the apoſtle tells us, *That it is Chriſt that is dead, nay rather that is riſen again, and ſits at the right hand of God*; what doth he infer from thence? Who ſhall therefore lay any thing to his charge? as much as to ſay, 'till Chriſt himſelf came off from men's ſins, they were in danger of being charged with ſin ſtill. It is Chriſt that died, made ſatisfaction; nay rather, that is riſen again, then he comes off; and the coming off of Chriſt himſelf from the ſins he bore, was that which gives diſcharge unto believers, that now nothing can be laid to them; but ſtill *he is riſen*, is as much as to ſay, Chriſt is now come off himſelf, but he was not before he was riſen; and by this he being ſecured from ſin, we are ſecure in him.

Now let us come to ſome application, to ſee how near

[q] At the reſurrection of Chriſt there was indeed a freſh declaration of his ſonſhip, his almighty power being exerted in the raiſing himſelf, *Rom.* i. 4. And ſo the begetting of Chriſt as a ſon is applied to his reſurrection, *Acts* xiii. 33. as it may be to any time, act, or inſtance, in which his divine power as the ſon of God is diſplayed; but that there was any redintegration, or renewing of his ſonſhip, or a begetting him anew as a ſon, cannot be ſafely ſaid: Chriſt, indeed, during his ſtate of humiliation was in the form of a ſervant, and ſo was conſidered by his Father, and his divine ſonſhip was little ſeen by men, yea by ſome he was charged with blaſphemy for aſſerting it, and was put to death for it; the reproach of which blaſphemy was wiped off by his reſurrection; but his divine Father always conſidered him as his Son, and more than once, in that ſtate, declared him to be ſo; and Chriſt in his laſt moments commended his Spirit into the hands of God as his Father; wherefore if the Dr's meaning is, as ſome take it, that he was for a time abdicated by his Father, and as it were diſowned as his Son, and upon his reſurrection embraced again as ſuch, I think he muſt be miſtaken.

near we can bring this home, to ſatisfy and bring reſt to a weary loaden ſpirit.

The uſe that I ſhall make of this point of God's laying, and the reality of paſſing over iniquity upon Chriſt, and deſire every one of you to make with me, ſhall be this; only to preſs upon you a neceſſary and infallible inference that follows upon it; and that is this, if the Lord hath laid iniquity upon Chriſt, then whoſoever thou art to whom the Lord will be pleaſed to give the believing of this truth, that thine iniquity is laid upon him, that is an abſolute and full diſcharge to thee; ſo that there neither is, nor can be, any for the preſent, or hereafter, laid to thy charge, let the perſon be who he will; if the Lord, I ſay again, give to any to believe this truth, that it is his iniquity he hath laid upon Chriſt, God himſelf cannot charge any one ſin upon him.

Mark well, I beſeech you, beloved, *Rom.* viii. 33. and ponder it a little, and ſee whether God himſelf can charge iniquity upon any, when once laid upon Chriſt.

He begins with triumph, with a great deal of magnanimity of ſpirit, *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* who? may ſome ſay, he againſt whom the elect have tranſgreſſed? No, (ſaith the apoſtle) *It is God that juſtifieth, who ſhall condemn?* I pray mark it a little: underſtand rightly what it is for God to juſtify: to juſtify a perſon, is to diſcharge him from ſuch a fault, or crime, that may be objected againſt him: ſuppoſe a man actually to be arraigned, it may be for twenty bills of indictment; upon the examination of all theſe, peradventure nineteen of them are manifeſtly

manifeſtly falſe, the man is clear of all of them; but the twentieth he is found guilty of, and upon examination he is found to be faulty: whether now doth the judge juſtify, or pronounce this perſon juſt, or no, where there is one fault that can be charged upon him? he muſt be clear of every fault before he can be pronounced juſt. When the Lord juſtifies any perſon whatſoever, his juſtification is pronouncing his innocence; if he be criminal, he is not juſt, and if he be juſt, he is not criminal. To ſay that a perſon is juſt, and yet to ſay he is now criminal when he is juſt, is a contradiction: to pronounce a perſon juſt, is to pronounce him wholly innocent and clear from crime. Now then, if to juſtify a perſon, is to pronounce him clear from any crime, where is the iniquity that can be laid to thy charge, being a juſt perſon, as every believer is? doth God now charge any ſin upon thy ſpirit? if he doth, he doth in this pronounce thee an unjuſt perſon; and if he pronounce thee unjuſt, he doth not juſtify thee; for to juſtify, and yet to charge with a fault, is a contradiction: ſo that from the time the Lord juſtifies any perſon, he charges no ſin ever after that upon him; except you will ſay, he once juſtifies men, and then unjuſtifies them again. How many juſtifications muſt we then make in the life of a believer, if ſins committed be charged upon the ſpirit of the man himſelf? As often as ſin is committed anew, there is a revocation of a former juſtification, and a turning of that into an unjuſtification of him again: for tho' it be generally received, that ſanctification is a ſucceſſive act, that is, God ſanctifies us again and again, more

more and more; yet, that juſtification is an act of God at once, and the application, or giving of Chriſt to a perſon, is the juſtification of him: a man's juſtification, therefore, being but one act of God, how can it be ſucceſſive? How much leſs can it be revoked, and a juſtified perſon ſtand afterwards unjuſtified? The apoſtle makes it ſo clear, that there can be no queſtion made againſt it; *It is God that juſtifieth, who ſhall condemn?* As much as to ſay, the ſame God that juſtifies, will not paſs ſentence of condemnation upon one that hath received the ſentence of abſolution already. No, you will ſay, God doth not condemn; but yet he will let ſin be charged upon the ſpirit of a man; doth not he then ſentence him to be unjuſt?

There be divers condemnations, condemnation in ſentence, and in execution. Condemnation in ſentence, is a pronouncing of ſuch a perſon guilty. You know, it is an ordinary courſe at the trial of a man at the bar, he is condemned when he is pronounced guilty. Now the other condemnation, which is the execution of puniſhment deſerved for guilt, is but the effect of condemnation, rather than that itſelf. So far as God charges fault upon a perſon, ſo far he condemns him; ſo, that if God ſhould charge a man as faulty, how can you believe ſtill that he is pronounced juſt by him?

I beſeech you, beloved, ſtop your ears againſt all theſe quirks of ſatan, and of your own deceived hearts by him, clamouring ſtill to you, that ſin lies yet upon you, and upon your own ſpirits. It is but the voice of a lying ſpirit in your own hearts, that ſaith, that you, that are believers, have yet ſin waſting your conſciences, and lying as a burthen

then too heavy for you to bear[r]; I ſay, all the weight, the burthen, the very ſin itſelf, is long ago laid upon Chriſt; and, that laying of it upon him, is a full diſcharge and a general acquittance unto thee, that there is not any one ſin now to be charged upon thee. How can theſe two propoſitions ſtand together, thy ſin is laid upon Chriſt, and yet lies upon thee? If God himſelf ſay it lies upon thee, and withal ſays, he before laid it upon Chriſt, how much is this better than a contradiction? But many will be ready to object, and this ſeems to be a very ſtrong one:

Was not *David* a juſtified perſon, and did not he bear his own ſin, tho' he was juſtified? *My ſins are gone over my head, they are a burden too heavy for me to bear:* and ſo many of God's people make the like complaint; by this it ſeemeth, tho' a perſon be juſtified, tho' his ſins be laid upon Chriſt, yet he himſelf bears the weight of them.

I anſwer, I am not ignorant, beloved, that this objection ſeems to ſome to be unanſwerable, and no marvel, till light breaks out of darkneſs to clear the truth.

Firſt, I would fain know, whether now, under the times of the goſpel, there be not many tender-hearted

[r] This is a paſſage that is excepted to, but without juſt cauſe. It is true, indeed, ſin ſometimes lies upon the conſcience of a believer, as a burden too heavy for him to bear, as on *David*, and ſadly waſtes the conſcience, that is, deſtroys the peace of it; but to what is this owing? To unbelief, which is no other than the voice of a lying ſpirit, it gives God the lye, and deceives the hearts of his people, 1 *Joh.* v. 10. *Heb.* iii. 12. it is ſo when it tells believers their ſins are upon themſelves, and muſt be bore by them, though long ago, as the Dr. obſerves, laid on Chriſt with all their weight; and that the wrath of God is upon them, and they ought to ſuffer diſtreſs and anguiſh in their ſouls for them, though their conſciences have been purged by the blood of Chriſt.

hearted religious people, that cry out of their own ſins, and of the weight and burthen of them upon their ſpirits, as well as *David?* I muſt tell you, all that he ſpeaks here, is from himſelf, and all that he ſpake from himſelf was not truth [s]: take that paſſage of his, *Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger ſhut up his tender mercies? and will he be favourable no more? I have waſhed my hands in vain.* Did *David* ſpeak well in theſe paſſages, to charge God that he had forſaken him for ever, and that he will never be gracious more, and I have waſhed my hands in innocency in vain? Did *David* (I ſay) ſpeak well to charge God thus? If a weak believer complain, that makes not every thing a truth he complains of. *David* might miſtake, that God ſhould charge his ſin upon him; and, it may be, he might charge his ſin upon himſelf, without any warrant or commiſſion from God.

But we will go a little further: ſuppoſe we grant *David* did indeed bear the weight of his own tranſgreſſions, and it was according to the will and pleaſure of God, he having ſinned, that he himſelf

[s] Here a great charge is brought, but without reaſon: every thing that a good man ſays of himſelf, and of the dealings of God with him, is not true; he only ſpeaks according to his preſent apprehenſion of things, through a miſguided conſcience, and the power of unbelief, as *David*, *Pſ.* xxxi. 22. And ſo *Aſaph*, whom the Dr. through miſtake calls *David*, and who himſelf acknowledges it was his infirmity to ſay what he did, *Pſ.* lxxvii. 7,--10. and lxxiii. 13,--15. and as the church, *If.* xl. 27. and xlix. 14, 15, 16. And under a like miſtake *David* ſeems to be in the paſſage under conſideration, *Pſ.* xxxviii. 1,--4. for it is plain he thought God was rebuking him in wrath, and chaſtening him in ſore diſpleaſure, which he deprecates; and what the Dr. after obſerves, that there was ſomething peculiar in his caſe, agreeable to the then diſpenſation of things, which required he ſhould bear his ſins till a ſacrifice was offered, is not to be deſpiſed.

himſelf ſhould bear it; and ſuppoſe we grant, that while he did bear it he was a juſtified perſon, according to the covenant of grace, God made with him; yet it will not follow from hence, that this inſtance of *David* ſhould be a precedent to believers under the times of the goſpel. I will clear a myſtery unto you, tho' I have ſpoken elſewhere ſomething of it; and I will clear it from the apoſtle himſelf in the epiſtle to the *Hebrews*; there is a great deal of difference between the times of *David*, and of the goſpel, and that in particular, of a man bearing his own ſin. *David* was under a covenant of grace, and Chriſt was the ſubſtance of it; and ſo he had remiſſion of ſins, but with ſuch a great difference, that the caſe is marvellouſly altered by Chriſt himſelf: it is true, when *David* ſinned there was a ſacrifice for his ſin; and it is as true, that there was no remiſſion to be found, till the performance of it: *And they ſhall bring their ſacrifice to the prieſt, and he ſhall make atonement for them, and their ſins ſhall be forgiven them*, Numb. xv. 28. Here is forgiveneſs of ſins, but they muſt bear their ſins till their ſacrifice was offered; now the ſin of *David* might lie upon himſelf till he had performed his ſacrifice; becauſe there was no remiſſion to be found till that was offered: now it is too probable that *David* concealing his ſin ſo long as he did, made no great haſte to bring a ſacrifice for it; and till that was offered, there was no remiſſion. Again, ſuppoſe his particular ſacrifice was offered, yet that could not make thoſe that came to it perfect: in *Heb.* x. 6. and ix. 9. ſpeaking of thoſe ſacrifices, the apoſtle ſaith, that they were

but

but a *Figure for the preſent*; and that it was impoſſible that thoſe gifts and ſacrifices ſhould make perfect the comers thereunto; to wit, they that did the ſervice could not thereby be made perfect: the truth is, tho' there was ſome remiſſion, and ſo conſequently ſome peace, upon the offering of thoſe ſacrifices, yet ſomething was left behind, for which there was a yearly ſacrifice to take away; even among the people of the *Jews*, under their covenant of grace which they had; which, tho' it were ſuch a covenant, yet had not the large grants and charters that we have, now Chriſt is come; tho' they had remiſſion of ſins, yet it was ſucceſſive, and admitted of intermiſſions and ſtops; ſins committed before the ſacrifice was offered, were remitted by it; but no ſins committed after it, had any remiſſion by the former ſacrifice, but muſt ſtay for it till another ſucceeded: and from hence it appears, ſince there was a reiterating of ſin, they had always ſome ſin or other ſtill lying upon their perſons, becauſe there was a ſucceſſive offering up of new ſacrifices. *David* complains of bearing his own ſins; the reaſon is this, all the ſacrifice he could make uſe of could not make his conſcience perfect; as it is plain in *Heb.* ix. 9. *It could not make the comers thereunto perfect:* ſo that tho' ſin did lie upon *David* till ſuch ſacrifice took them away, yet it doth not follow under the goſpel, ſince Chriſt's coming, that ſin ſhould lie any time upon the ſpirit of a believer in Chriſt. Why ſo, will you ſay? I anſwer, The apoſtle tells us, concerning Chriſt himſelf, that he is *become the mediator of a better teſtament*; wherein better, will you ſay? I anſwer briefly, in this regard, *He is*

able to ſave to the uttermoſt them that come to God by him; as you have it in *Heb.* vii. 25. mark it, there is the difference; the ſacrifices wherein the remiſſion of ſins was received, *could not make the comers thereto perfect*, but Chriſt being come, *He ſaves to the utmoſt them that come to God by him:* look into *Heb.* x. 14. there you ſhall find wherein the main difference lies, *By one ſacrifice*, ſaith the apoſtle, (ſpeaking of Chriſt offering himſelf) *he hath perfected them that are ſanctified:* the difference is this, Chriſt being once come, the ſacrifice of his own body had ſuch a fulneſs of ſatisfaction in it, that there never needed any more to be done to the end of the world, for the taking away of any ſin; but all manner of ſins, of all believers, to the end of the world, were at once taken away by that ſacrifice, and that *for ever.*

So that now a believer is not to wait till a new ſacrifice be performed, that he might be diſcharged from ſuch and ſuch a ſin; but as ſoon as ever he hath committed it, he hath *the Lamb of God* in his eye, *that takes away the ſins of the world*; that hath already taken away this very ſin, at this very inſtant committed. Beloved, conſider well of it, either Chriſt hath taken away all ſin already, or one of theſe two things muſt needs follow; either the believer himſelf is to bear his own ſin, or Chriſt is to come again, and do ſomething more to take away that which remains behind: I ſay, if all ſin be not taken away by what is done already, there muſt be ſomewhat done to take it away; but, ſaith the apoſtle, in *Heb.* x. 26. *There remains now no more ſacrifice for ſin.* In vain do men now look for ſomething elſe, to come to take away

away this and that tranſgreſſion; for there remains no more ſacrifice for ſin; that one ſacrifice did all that was ever to be done, and therefore there is no more to follow: if therefore all be done by Chriſt that is to be done, to make *perfect the comers unto him*, and *to ſave them to the uttermoſt*; then all the ſins that believers now commit, or hereafter ſhall commit, nay, all the ſins that all the believers to the end of the world ſhall commit, are already laid upon Chriſt, he hath nailed them to his croſs. Therefore, ſaith the apoſtle, in 1 *John* i. 7. *The blood of Jeſus Chriſt his ſon cleanſeth us from all ſin.*

And whereas ſome may be ready to ſay, That this paſſage, that the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all upon him, is not peculiar unto theſe times now, after Chriſt's coming; for it ſeems the prophet *Iſaiah* did proclaim the mind of the Lord in particular, before Chriſt himſelf came in perſon.

To this I anſwer, That all the prophets paſſages concerning the fulneſs of grace to come by Chriſt, tho' they were ſpoken by them in their time; yet had reference to future times, after Chriſt's coming, and had not reference, in reſpect of their fulneſs, to thoſe times wherein they ſpake: for the clearing of this, I ſhall deſire you to conſult a few words that *Peter* hath, being moſt full and clear to this purpoſe as can be deſired, 1 *Pet.* i. 9, 10, 11. *Receiving the end of your faith, even the ſalvation of your ſouls.* Here he ſpeaks of the perfect fulneſs that comes by Chriſt, that is, ſalvation; *of which ſalvation the prophets have enquired, and ſearched diligently, who propheſied of the grace that ſhould come unto you, when they teſtified beforehand of*

the ſufferings of Chriſt, and of the glory that ſhould follow; *unto whom*, that is, unto the prophets, *it was revealed, that not unto themſelves, but unto us, they did miniſter the things that are now reported unto you by them that preached the goſpel unto you.* The apoſtle ſays plainly, *they diligently ſearched* into the times wherein thoſe things they then propheſied of ſhould come to paſs; and that they did not preach them to themſelves, and that they did not adminiſter theſe things unto themſelves, but to us; I ſay, therefore, ſtill Chriſt was the foundation of the covenant they had, and remiſſion of ſins was a fruit of it; but their covenant took not all their ſins away; ſome were upon them for the time, which was the cauſe of their complaint: but Chriſt now hath taken all our ſins away, that we are become incomparably perfect; and not only perfect in reſpect of ſin to be charged on us, being paſſed from us upon Chriſt, but alſo our very conſciences are acquitted: for, ſaith the apoſtle, ſpeaking of the conſciences of God's people under the goſpel, in reſpect of the full diſcharge from ſin, in *Heb.* x. 22. *Therefore* (having ſpoken ſo largely of the remiſſion of ſins, upon which there remains no more ſacrifice) *we may come with boldneſs to the throne of grace with a true heart, and full aſſurance of faith.* Upon what ground? Having our hearts purged or ſprinkled from an evil conſcience.

O let not therefore, beloved, I beſeech you, any objection or objectors in the world, take you off from ſtanding faſt in that liberty wherein Chriſt hath made you free, and do not again entangle yourſelves

yourſelves with ſuch yokes of bondage, that neither you nor your fathers were able to bear.

If the ceremonies of the *Jews* were ſo weighty, and ſuch yokes of bondage, what are the ſins of people lying upon them? Beloved, you may ſearch and enquire into many ways to find reſt to your ſouls while they are diſquieted; but if your hearts are rightly enlightened, and really tender, all the ways in the world ſhall never give reſt to the ſole of your foot, nor the leaſt comfort to your ſpirits, till you find reſt upon this one principle, that the Lord hath diſcharged all your ſins, and will remember no one ſin againſt you; till, I ſay, you can behold a general releaſe, all the whole ſcore croſſed, and God diſcharging you from every filthineſs, there can be no reſt to your ſpirits. Is there one ſin upon you? that one ſin will prove ſo heavy a preſſure on you, that you ſhall never be able to endure it, eſpecially when the Lord ſhall let you ſee what the fearful weight of any one ſin is; but if you can receive this principle, that every ſin you have committed, or ſhall commit, is caſt upon the Lord Chriſt, and carried away; that you ſhall never hear again of any of them, in regard of accuſation from God, or in regard of juſt accuſation from your own ſpirits, then ſhall your ſouls return to their reſt: but if you be not fully ſettled upon this principle, that the Lord hath ſo taken away every ſin of every believer, that there is not any one remaining, nor any one ſhall remain for God to charge upon you, you can have none. Give me leave to bring in a

few paſſages of ſcripture, that will be ſo evident, that except perſons will wilfully reſiſt the truth, they cannot but ſit down with this reſolution of ſpirit, that all their ſins are manifeſtly taken from them, and they perfectly diſcharged of them. In *Pſalm* li. 7. *David* complains, and makes his addreſs to God, *Waſh me*, ſaith he, and what is the fruit of God's waſhing? *Waſh me, and I ſhall be whiter than ſnow.* That God, when he firſt enters into covenant with perſons, waſhes them, is as clear as the light: mark that in *Ezek.* xvi. 8, 9, 10. *When I paſſed by thee, I entered into covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine; then waſhed I thee with water:* I ſay, when God enters into covenant with his people, he waſhes them; and, how doth he waſh them? Doth he leave ſome ſpots, blemiſhes, and ſtains behind? No: *Waſh me*, ſaith he, *and I ſhall be whiter than ſnow.* What blots can you find upon ſnow itſelf? there is nothing clearer than ſnow; yet, ſaith the prophet, *I ſhall be whiter than ſnow.*

Look into *Cant.* iv. 7. ſee what an abſolute diſcharge there is to every one that is a member of Chriſt, and that is a preſent one too; it is not for hereafter; *Thou art all fair my love, there is no ſpot in thee:* it is not, thou ſhalt be all fair, or have no ſpot in thee; but thou art even now ſo; ſo ſoon as thou art my ſpouſe, thou art fair; nay, *thou art all fair*; nay, *there is not any one ſpot in thee:* is this the voice of Chriſt, or not? Look into *Iſa.* xliii. 25. you ſhall ſee what a full diſcharge is given, *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for mine own name's ſake, and will not remember thy ſins.*

Beloved,

Beloved, ſuppoſe a perſon before a judge be arraigned for felony, and he that accuſes him appeals to the judge himſelf, ſaying, Do not you know that this man committed ſuch a thing? The judge ſaith, I remember no ſuch thing; now if no other evidence comes in, is not the judge's not remembring any ſuch thing, a ſufficient diſcharge for him? The Lord ſaith, *I will not remember their ſins*; how then can he charge them upon them, when he will not remember them? Shall I come and witneſs againſt a man, and ſay, he did ſteal, and is guilty of theft, and yet I never remember it? The Lord doth not remember, therefore he doth not charge: nay, ſaith he, *I am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions:* now what is it to blot out a thing? Suppoſe there be a deed, or a bond, wherein a debt is chargeable upon a man, and every line and letter of it are blotted out; how can it be charged upon him, eſpecially when the creditor himſelf hath blotted it out? where can this be charged? *I, even I, am he* (ſaith the Lord) *that blotteth out*: if any other beſides the creditor ſhould blot out a debt, there were ſome cauſe left of fear; but if the creditor himſelf ſhall do it, what need the debtor make any queſtion of it? So if any creature in the world ſhould undertake to blot out ſin but God, this might not hold good; but, when he himſelf comes and blots it out, where is any charge that can be laid upon him? he cannot recall his own act again.

In *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25. you ſhall ſee what a full diſcharge is given to believers: *Then will I ſprinkle clean water upon you, and you ſhall be clean from all your filthineſs, and from all your idols will I cleanſe*

you; *a new heart will I give you, and a new ſpirit will I put into you:* mark, what is that the Lord cleanſes from? *All filthineſs:* even then, when he enters into covenant, gives a new heart, becomes the God of a people, then he ſprinkles with clean water, and they are clean from all their filthineſs.

Look into *Daniel* ix. 23, 24. you ſhall find, that the Lord whiſpers a ſecret in the ears of *Daniel*, which he would make him know was a fruit of the greatneſs of his love unto him; *I am come to ſhew thee, for thou art greatly beloved, therefore underſtand the matter, and conſider the viſion*, or myſtery: what is that ſecret that God will impart unto him, as the greateſt expreſſion of his love? it is this; *Yet ſeventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city*; and what is it that follows upon theſe ſeventy weeks? (Mark the words I pray) *To finiſh the tranſgreſſion, to make an end of ſin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlaſting righteouſneſs.* Neither tranſgreſſion, nor ſin, were finiſhed, nor iniquity come to an end, nor everlaſting righteouſneſs brought in, until the ſeventy weeks were ended; but upon the determination of them, then came ſin to be finiſhed. Mark the words well, iniquity then came to an end, and then came in everlaſting righteouſneſs. And Chriſt ſeems to touch upon this very prophecy, when it was accompliſhed upon the croſs, *It is finiſhed*, ſaith he: what is the meaning? what is finiſhed? ſin is finiſhed; for the ſpeech hath reference unto the prophecy of *Daniel*; not that his ſuffering, but ſin was finiſhed; for he lay in the grave 'till the third day afterward, and was under death, but ſin was

finiſhed according to that prophecy: now the ſeventy weeks being fulfilled, what tranſgreſſions can you have upon your conſciences? wherefore do you complain ſo much of the burthen of them, ſeeing that ſin is finiſhed? If thy preſent tranſgreſſions be not finiſhed, at the ſeventy weeks end, by that ſuffering of his, there is no truth in that of *Daniel*, ſin is finiſhed; a thing is not finiſhed, when there remains any thing to be done about it; if there remain ſome ſins to be taken away, then ſin is not finiſhed; but at the end of ſeventy weeks, ſin was finiſhed by Chriſt, and came to an end.

I could inſtance in many other paſſages of ſcripture; it were infinite to name them all; and ſuch they are, as are more worth, and more glorious, than all the treaſures of the world. Any one of all theſe is a general diſcharge to every believer in the world.

But you will ſay, do not believers commit ſin now?

I anſwer, They commit tranſgreſſion, but long before they did it, it was paid for, and taken away; all the ſcore is croſſed, even from the time that Chriſt bore the ſins of many upon the croſs.

It is true, the Lord leaves the ſins that believers act, legible ſtill, tho' croſſed: as when a man hath croſſed his book, one may read every particular ſum, or debt, that was formerly written; and tho' he may read them, yet it doth not follow that they are debts, for the croſſing of it takes away the nature of the debt: God croſſed the ſcore when Chriſt died, and then it was no more debt; all our ſins, as a debt, were then finiſhed; only

only God will leave that, which was before a debt, fairly written ſtill, that we may read them, and ſee how many there are, and what great ſums they amount unto; that ſo we might have hereby the clearer occaſion, diligently to ſet forth the praiſe of the glory of that grace, that hath croſſed ſuch a ſcore.

But ſome will be ready to ſay, yet once more, this kind of doctrine opens a wide gap to all manner of licentiouſneſs. Licentiouſneſs! how ſo? You will ſay, if a perſon know, before he hath committed his ſin, that whatſoever he ſhall commit afterwards, are already laid upon Chriſt, and there is no fear he ſhall receive any damage by them; who will not break out into all manner of ſins, that are ſo pleaſing to men's corrupt natures, when they know they can have no hurt by them.

1. I anſwer, Did not the Lord himſelf know what corrupt inferences men would draw from grace revealed, and made to appear? Is it dangerous to preach the free grace of God, leſt men ſhould draw licentious inferences from it?

Where was the wiſdom of God, that could not conceal theſe truths, that are ſo dangerous to be publiſhed? Did the Lord, and was he pleaſed, whatever danger might follow, to reveal the truth ſo graciouſly, and ſhall we ſay, we muſt mince it, or depreſs it, becauſe ſome abuſe it, and corrupt inferences are made of it?

2. I anſwer, If it be truth the Lord hath revealed, that we may, and ſhould publiſh it abroad unto men; then we muſt preach it, let the conſequences be what they will.

But I anſwer further, there is no ſuch danger from

from thoſe to whom this free grace is tendered, that they ſhould make ſuch corrupt inferences: I do not deny, beloved, but that ſuch as are rejected and given up of God, may make licentious uſes of theſe gracious tenders of Chriſt, and the fulneſs of pardon by him; but, who ever ſaid, that this fulneſs of grace, or any part of it, belongs to ſuch that are rejected? Do not we ſay, that believers are the only perſons on whom the Lord confers it, and to whom he gives to receive it? Not that believing, in the act of it, is the efficient, or confirmation, but the manifeſtation of it to them, that it belongs to them: as for others that are not believers, we do not ſay their part is in it; it may be in it, tho' they be not now believers; yet we cannot for the preſent ſay they have their part in it, 'till they believe: tho' they do not now believe, they may afterwards; and whenever they do, that which before was hid, appears by believing.

I draw to an end: I ſay again, for believers, that the revelation of the fulneſs of grace, and acquittance from ſin, are ſo far from opening a gap unto licentiouſneſs of life; that the truth is, there is nothing in the world that raiſes up ſuch a glorious ſanctified life, as to know the full deliverance of the ſoul from ſin: mark but what *Zachariah* ſaith, in *Luke* i. 74, 75. *That he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might ſerve him without fear, in holineſs and righteouſneſs.* It imports thus much unto us, that the ſerving of God, without fear, is the fruit of a ſaint's deliverance from his enemies, from ſin: the more we believe that ſin is already paſſed and carried away, the more ſhall we ſerve him without fear;

fear; therefore, *Solomon* ſpeaks excellently, *The righteous are bold as a lion*; thoſe that are once ſure, in reſpect of God and their own ſouls, adventure upon any thing he calls them out unto; miſcarry, or not miſcarry, it is all one with them, for all ſtands right between God and them. While men know not whether their ſins are paſſed away, and themſelves diſcharged, and that there is no danger in reſpect of them, how many duties that God calls them to, do they baulk? and how many ſufferings, for the cauſe of God, are they ready to ſhrink from, before they have the aſſurance of the pardon of their ſins? The apoſtle tells us, *That the grace of God*, his loving-kindneſs and favour, *that brings ſalvation, hath appeared:* what is the fruit? Are we ſaved by grace? Then may we live as we liſt, may ſome ſay? No; *this grace, that brings ſalvation, teaches us to deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts; and to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world.* However others may turn the grace of God into wantonneſs, yet believers, who have received this mercy, and aſſurance thereof, to have all their ſins caſt upon Chriſt, cannot ſin in this kind; and why not? *They are born of God*, (ſaith St. *John*) *and they cannot ſin, becauſe the ſeed of God abides in them*; or as the apoſtle expreſſeth it more fully thus, *We are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto ſalvation*, 1 Pet. i. 5. It is moſt certainly true, indeed, corrupt nature, having no bridle to reſtrain it from ſin, but only the ſour ſauce that follows, take away that, corrupt nature will break out. But, beloved, take the believer ſaved by grace, and delivered from all his ſins, he hath another principle

ple over-ruling in his ſpirit, and that is the ſeed of God in him; and this ſo over-rules him, that he hath not that maw (as we uſe to ſay) as he had when corrupt nature had power over him.

But, you will ſay, then this is ground of preſumption; how many thouſands will run into it, upon this doctrine delivered?

I anſwer, Underſtand preſumption well; conſider what it is, and then you ſhall ſee how vain the objection is. What is it? It is no more but this, promiſing to myſelf any great thing without any good ground: if I promiſe myſelf, ſuch a man will give me an hundred pounds, and he never ſaid ſo, and I have no ground to think ſo, this is preſumption; but, if a man engages himſelf to give me ſo much, is it preſumption in me to expect it, tho' I pay nothing for it? So, here, if ſo be that the diſcharge from all ſin at once, were without any ground, it were preſumption to build upon it; but if the Lord hath, as you have heard, publiſhed all this to the world, of his grace to men, what preſumption is it to build upon ſo ſure a foundation as the word of grace? God himſelf muſt change before this bottom, whereupon the foot of a believer ſtands, ſhall ſink.

But, you will ſay, tho' there be this free grace, and full diſcharge of ſin, Chriſt taking ſin upon himſelf; yet it doth not belong to licentious perſons, therefore it ſhould not be publiſhed ſo generally as men preach it.

I anſwer, Who is it for? Is it for the righteous, or for the wicked? *I came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance*, ſaith our Saviour; that is, to turn and come to me. It is not for

for *the whole, they need not the phyſician, but the ſick.* In brief, beloved, mark but the tenor of the goſpel, and you ſhall ſee who they are to whom the free grace of God is tendered; *If, while we were enemies,* (ſaith *Paul*) *Chriſt died for us, how much more ſhall we be ſaved by his life?* Now I will aſk, whether is the free grace of God delivered to the enemies of Chriſt, conſidered as ſuch, or no? *When I ſaw thee polluted in thy blood, I ſware unto thee, and I ſpread my ſkirt over thee, and entered into covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine,* and all this in blood, *Then waſhed I thee with water*; when? after he had ſworn, and entered into covenant, and ſpread his ſkirt over them. To whom, beloved, doth this entrance into the free covenant belong? Why, to perſons in their blood before their waſhing; for waſhing follows entering into covenant: *In due time,* ſaith the apoſtle, *Chriſt died for the ungodly:* and, in *Rom.* iv. 5. it is expreſſed thus; *Now to him that worketh not, but to him that believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is imputed to him for righteouſneſs.* It is the ungodly that God juſtifieth, and who is he? the ungodly that doth not work: *Not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that ſheweth mercy.* Now, then, to whom ſhould we preach the free grace of God, and diſcharge from all ſin, but to thoſe to whom the Lord himſelf reaches it out? But you will ſay, doth it belong to all? I anſwer, it belongeth not to all, but to every ungodly man under heaven, to whom God will give to believe and receive this truth; *He came to his own, and his own received him not; but as many as received*

ceived him, to them he gave power to become the ſons of God, even to as many as believed in his name. The truth is, it is a ſecret in the boſom of the Lord himſelf, to whom the grace belongs; *And ſecret things belong unto God, but things revealed belong to us and our children*; wherefore we are to publiſh it to particular perſons; and to every one to whom the Lord gives to believe, this grace belongs; for, when he believes it, it is manifeſt to him, that his full portion is in it, let his converſation be what it will before.

I ſpeak not this to bolſter any man in any way of wickedneſs; for when the Lord gives faith, he will certainly change the heart, and that will work by love: this, I ſay, that when God is pleaſed to make a perſon ſo to ſee his own ſin and emptineſs, as to reach after the grace of God in Chriſt, there is not a ſoul that believes in Chriſt, and reaches after him, that poſſibly can miſcarry; *Him that comes to me, I will not caſt off*; no one that believeth. There is not one ſoul under heaven, but if the Lord gives him to come, and receive this grace, and not reject it, (let his ſins be what they will) there is a preſent participation; nay more, there is a preſent manifeſtation to him in ſpecial, that all the grace of the goſpel is his. And ſo much for this time.

SERMON

SERMON XX.

To lay our Sins on Chriſt, is the Lord's Prerogative only.

ISAIAH liii. 6.

And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

I HAVE made entrance formerly in ſome other place (as ſome here preſent peradventure know) upon the words that I have now read unto you. The whole myſtery of the goſpel, in the excellency of it, is ſummed up in them, and in what goes immediately before; even thoſe excellencies which tho' the prophets ſpake of before, yet it was revealed unto them, *That not unto themſelves, but unto us theſe things were particularly intended*, concerning this glorious goſpel; the whole compleatneſs of the people of God, from the firſt riſe of it to the conſummation of it, with all the ſteps and degrees to it, is compriſed in this text. And leſt any ſhould boaſt of himſelf when he ſhall partake of the glory of this grace, the Lord is pleaſed to lay down a caveat in the beginning of it, *All we, like ſheep, have gone aſtray, we have turned every man to his own way:* this is the beſt we are, and in this condition the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all; that ſo all the world may know, even the beſt of men, that

that not for their own righteouſneſs, doth the Lord do this to them, or for them.

But I muſt not dwell upon particulars, which I have formerly delivered upon this ſubject. I will lead you by the hand, and point out what I have paſſed through, that ſo we may make a more orderly progreſs. Every word in this text hath ſo much weight in it, that each word contains a great latitude and immenſeneſs in it of the grace of God to us.

1. It is iniquity itſelf that the Lord hath laid upon Chriſt; not only our puniſhment, but our very ſin.

2. And that this tranſaction of our ſins to Chriſt, is a real act; our ſins ſo became Chriſt's, that he ſtood the ſinner in our ſtead, and we diſcharged.

3. That which remains yet to be conſidered, is another branch, ſhooting out of this tree of life, for ſo I may call this text; and that is drawn from the efficient of this great grace of laying our iniquities upon Chriſt; it is the Lord himſelf that is the agent; he himſelf hath done this thing; *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* As ſatan hath caſt a miſt over other glorious branches of the goſpel, ſo he hath endeavoured to caſt very darkneſs itſelf over this truth, namely, *That this is the Lord's own act.* It is true, ſatan is contented to allow men general and groſs notions of it, that our iniquities are diſpoſed of by the Lord; but when there ſhall be a thorough ſearching into particulars concerning this truth, then he beſtirs himſelf, even to raiſe contradictions againſt what men, in general, will grant. The truth is,

beloved, it is hardly received of men, and very rare it is, to let the Lord himſelf be the ſole and only agent, in laying our iniquity upon Chriſt; and yet if it were not he alone that did it, all the creatures in the world would break their backs with heaving at iniquity to lay it upon him. And aſſuredly, beloved, let any man take any other courſe in the world, putting the work of laying iniquity upon any other, but the Lord alone, he ſhall never effect it, he ſhall never lay it upon Chriſt: the point therefore that I ſhall deliver, is briefly this.

It is the Lord, it is he ſingly, he excluſively, he only and alone, and none but he, that layeth iniquity upon Chriſt.

There is nothing in the world can do this but the Lord. Nay, I will go further, There is nothing in the world moves, perſwades, or prevails with him, to lay our iniquity upon Chriſt: the Lord is ſo alone the founder, and author, or agent in this work, that he is moved and ſtirred up only by himſelf to do it; and nothing in the world moves him to it but himſelf.

For the clearing of this truth, give me leave to dive a little into it, and I ſhall only deſire this juſtice at your hands, that the manifeſtation and evidence of ſcripture, may carry your judgments without prejudice; I ſay, for the clearing of it, I ſhall dive into theſe particulars.

The Lord is ſo the ſole agent, in laying our iniquities upon Chriſt, that even Chriſt himſelf doth not lay them upon himſef; nay, I muſt go yet further, the Lord himſelf doth ſo, of and from himſelf, without regard to any motive whereby he might

might be perſwaded to lay our iniquities upon Chriſt; that Chriſt himſelf is not the firſt motive to the Lord to do this thing: I ſay again, Chriſt is not the mover, or perſwader of the Lord unto it; but the Lord merely from himſelf ſimply, as he is the Lord God, moved and prevailed with himſelf alone to lay our iniquities upon him. And, yet, beloved, this will be no derogation to Chriſt at all, but will only conſtitute him in his own true and proper office as he is the mediator; for according to that office we ſpeak of him here. I ſay, It is not Chriſt himſelf that lays our iniquities upon himſelf: it is true, Chriſt doth many admirable things about iniquity, being laid upon him; *He takes away the ſins of the world*; *he bears the ſins of many*; *he is made ſin for us*; but you ſhall no where find, that Chriſt laid upon himſelf the ſins of man: he himſelf was as careful that his Father ſhould not be robbed of his own glory, as that his people may be ſaved by his righteouſneſs; all along you ſhall ſtill find that Chriſt is ſo far from making this taking of iniquity his own original act, that he ſtill acknowledges, that bearing it was not only for the pleaſure of his Father, but alſo in ſubjection unto him, and in obedience to his command: obſerve but that expreſſion of Chriſt himſelf, in *Heb.* x. 5. 6. you ſhall plainly perceive, that Chriſt doth not lay iniquity upon himſelf, but according to the charge of his Father, he is contented to take what he layeth upon him; *In burnt offerings and ſacrifices for ſin, thou haſt no pleaſure; then ſaid I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God: thy law is written*

in my heart, ſaith Chriſt there, *A body haſt thou prepared for me*, thou haſt fitted a body for me, *thou haſt bored mine ears*, &c. Out of theſe expreſſions I will obſerve this to you: 1. That the main diſcourſe of Chriſt here, hath reference to the taking away of the ſins of men; for, in the beginning of the chapter, you ſhall find how the apoſtle hath diſtinguiſhed between the weakneſs of the *Jewiſh* rites concerning remiſſion of ſins, and the efficacy of Chriſt's ſacrifice for the perfecting of it. In theſe ſervices there was a remembrance of ſin every year; *Becauſe it was impoſſible that the blood of bulls and goats ſhould take away ſin.* For this cauſe Chriſt comes into the world. To what purpoſe? To do that which thoſe ſacrifices could not do, to take away ſin perfectly: but by what authority came Chriſt? Doth he come of his own head? Doth he of himſelf take the ſin upon himſelf? No, beloved, he doth not; *In the volume of the book* (ſaith Chriſt) *it is written of me*, or as it is in the original, *in the head of the book it is written of me*; As if he had ſaid, in thy book it is written, as a chief head or matter; remiſſion of ſins is aſcribed unto me as a buſineſs committed unto me, or paſſed over to me.

But it may be by way of courteſy, ſome may ſay.

I anſwer, Mark well the meaning of that place, Chriſt ſaith, *Thy law is in my heart*; ſo then it ſeems this book which contains this buſineſs of Chriſt, about the remiſſion of ſins, is a book that runs in the ſtrain of a law upon him, or unto him; ſo that in the buſineſs of bearing the ſins of men, Chriſt was ſo far from taking it upon himſelf,

himſelf, to lay the iniquities of men upon himſelf, that he acknowledges himſelf under a law in this thing; nay, *Secondly*, See that it was the Lord's own buſineſs that Chriſt is ſent about; for he tells us expreſsly, that the Lord every way furniſhes him to this work: *A body haſt thou prepared me*, or fitted for me; and all to ſhew that Chriſt is in a manner paſſive about the buſineſs of taking off iniquity; he doth not take it upon himſelf, but only bears it, being laid on by the commiſſion, nay the hand of God himſelf. And therefore, in *Heb.* v. 9. the apoſtle tells us expreſly, That *tho' Chriſt were a Son, yet learned he obedience:* and in *John* x. 18. Chriſt ſaith, *I have power to lay down my life, and to take it up again, and no man can take it away from me*; in which he may ſeem to be his own mover, and that he doth it of himſelf to bear the ſins of men; yet afterwards he ſhews plainly, that he ſpeaks this not at all in reference to his father, but in reference to the creature; no man takes it away from him indeed, but in reſpect of them he lays it down himſelf; but in reference to the Father, he ſaith, *This commandment have I received from my Father, that I ſhould lay down my life.* That no man ſhould take away my life, that is true indeed, but that I ſhould lay it down: and in *John* xv. 10. our Saviour calls out his diſciples upon a ſervice of the Lord, from an argument of his own obedience; *As I have kept my Father's commandment, and abide in his love, ſo if you keep my commandment, ye ſhall abide in my love:* By all which expreſſions you may perceive, that Chriſt, as he ſtands the mediator and bearer of the ſins of men, ſtands as one looking ſtill for his

commiſſion, when the Lord himſelf will lay their iniquities on him; he doth not of himſelf, and of his own accord, lay them on himſelf; and therefore the apoſtle to the *Hebrews*, ſaith expreſsly, *No man taketh this office upon himſelf, but he that is called of God, as* Aaron *was.* What office was that? The office of the prieſthood to bear the ſins of men; and he ſpeaks of Chriſt himſelf in this place, that he did not take this office of bearing the ſins of men upon himſelf; but waited till the Lord was pleaſed to lay the load upon him, and then he laid his ſhoulders under it: it is true, God's laying iniquity upon Chriſt was not by compulſion; but there was a voluntary agreement; it was the agreement of a ſon to a father, that keeps his authority and power in this buſineſs; Chriſt is but the mediator; he comes between as he is choſen the umpire.

But if any ſhall ſay, Tho' Chriſt doth not lay the iniquities of men upon himſelf, yet ſurely he moves and perſuades the Father to lay them upon him.

I anſwer, This is received for a general truth, that what the Lord doth about the diſcharge of a believer's ſin, he doth all upon the motives Chriſt put him upon, by that prevalency that he hath with him; but, beloved, you ſhall find this, that in all Chriſt's diſcourſe, he very frequently puts off many things from himſelf, and gives them to his Father; and therefore he ſaith expreſsly, *That of himſelf he doth nothing, but as he hears ſo he ſpeaks.* It is true, that the Lord hath given to Chriſt the preheminence in all things, as he by whom alone he works all good in the world to the

ſons

ſons of men; but he hath not given Chriſt this preheminence, to be the firſt mover of him to do that good to men that he doth: the Lord himſelf is the fountain of his own motives, and is moved ſimply, and only from himſelf, to do that good that he doth to the ſons of men. And that it may appear plainly to you, that Chriſt was not the firſt mover of the Father to diſpoſe of the ſins of men upon himſelf, obſerve but this one thing, what was the motive that Chriſt himſelf ſhould have ſuch a being as he had, to wit, of mediatorſhip? Was not Chriſt himſelf given unto the world to be the Saviour of men? How could he be a motive to the Father to give him a being to move him, before he himſelf had a being to move withal? There muſt therefore be a love boiling in the Father to the ſons of men, that muſt ſtir him up to give Chriſt to be their Saviour, or elſe he could not have come into the world. If therefore the love of God to men, was the firſt mover of himſelf to give Chriſt to them, how could he be the mover of the Father, that he ſhould be given to them, ſince it was the good pleaſure of the Father that Chriſt ſhould be? It is true, indeed, Chriſt is the mover of the Father to execute all the good pleaſure of his to the ſons of men; but he is not the mover of him firſt to love them; the thoughts of God were from himſelf towards men. Now, becauſe that *mercy and truth might meet together, and righteouſneſs and peace might kiſs each other*, which only Chriſt could compaſs, therefore was he ſent of God into the world, to make up whatſoever might conduce to the accompliſhment of his love. When God firſt caſt his

love upon men, and ſaw their tranſgreſſions muſt be ſatisfied for, that juſtice might not be violated, that mercy might not ſwallow up juſtice, nor juſtice might not trample upon, nor devour mercy; therefore there muſt be ſatisfaction made, that juſtice might have its own right: for this cauſe Chriſt was ſent into the world as a *medium*, or means, whereby the love that God had formerly ſet upon the ſons of men, might have its free courſe without interruption.

Peradventure, beloved, this diſcourſe may ſeem ſomewhat vain and impertinent, that God himſelf ſhould be his own mover to lay the iniquities of the ſons of men upon the back of Chriſt; but now by that which follows you ſhall ſee, that it is of great concern; for if Chriſt himſelf did not lay our iniquities upon himſelf, and if he did not move the Father primarily to lay them upon him, how much leſs could we, and any thing we could do, attain to that height to lay them upon him? I know that all will be ready to grant, that Chriſt is greater with the Father than all the things in the world; and if any thing were able to move him to lay the iniquities of men upon Chriſt, he were able to do moſt in this matter; if then Chriſt himſelf doth not lay our iniquities upon himſelf, all that we can do, or are, cannot poſſibly do it.

There is a great miſtake (and I ſuppoſe it is out of ignorance, for lack of diving into the bottom of the goſpel) among men, I mean, among tender-hearted godly people, thoſe that are deeply wrought upon; and a conceit it is that is deeply rooted in their ſpirits, that ſome performances of their own muſt lay their iniquities upon Chriſt.

Suppoſe

Suppoſe there be a ſin committed, it may be more ſcandalous than ordinary, which peradventure to ſenſe wounds the ſpirit; the queſtion now is, what it is that muſt, or doth, rid ſuch a one of the ſting and guilt of this or ſuch like tranſgreſſions committed? What diſcharges the ſoul of ſuch a ſin? Uſually it is taught among us, by thoſe who would be accounted the greateſt proteſtants, and haters of popery, that the proportion of repentance, tears, ſorrow, and faſtings, anſwerable to the latitude and height of ſuch tranſgreſſions, is that that gives eaſe; this takes away the burthen, this lays the ſoul at reſt and quiets it: therefore when a ſoul hath tranſgreſſed, if it be tender, moſt, or almoſt, all the pantings of it, are after extraordinary enlargements in bitterneſs, heavineſs, mourning, melting, and tears; theſe are accounted they that waſh away iniquity: but, beloved, let me tell you, it is impoſſible that all the righteouſneſs of men, tho' it were more perfect than it can be, ſhould lay one iniquity, or the leaſt circumſtance of one, upon Chriſt. If a man could weep his heart out, if it could melt like wax, diſſolve into water, and guſh out rivers of tears for ſin; all this could not carry away the leaſt dram of the filthineſs of ſin from ſuch a ſoul unto Chriſt, nor unload the ſoul of any ſin to load him with it: therefore they do but deceive themſelves, that aſcribe the unloading and eaſing of their own ſpirits, to their greateſt enlargements in any performances in the world; Chriſt himſelf did not lay iniquity upon himſelf, much leſs can the righteouſneſs of any man lay it upon him. Look upon the beſt of your righteouſneſs, ſuppoſe the things

things mentioned already; ſuppoſe a ſpiritualneſs in all that righteouſneſs, what can they do towards this, namely, unloading a man's own ſpirit of his ſin, and the loading of Chriſt with it? Suppoſe the righteouſneſs you perform were perfect and compleat, that God himſelf could find no fault with it after any ſin is committed; make the largeſt ſuppoſition that can be imagined; when all this is done, what can all this conduce to the taking away of ſin already committed? Do you not owe all this righteouſneſs to God, as you are under his command? And if you owe it, then the very payment of it is but the payment of his own debt; and how can the payment of this debt diſcharge for a former debt? Suppoſe a man oweth two hundred pounds, to be paid each at ſix months, at two payments; if he fails in the payment of the firſt, and at the ſecond day of payment pays one of the hundred pounds, every penny of it, doth this ballance the account? doth the payment of the laſt hundred pounds ſatisfy the whole debt? If he had paid the firſt and ſecond hundred pounds, he had paid but what was due; can the ſecond payment then be any ſatisfaction and furtherance to payment of the former debt? No, not at all. In whatever we have ſinned, we have failed in the payment of that which was God's due; and when we come to perform any righteouſneſs, that is his due too: if we had not failed in the former, this latter is God's due too, this muſt have been paid; and when we perform any righteouſneſs after ſins committed, ſuppoſe it were perfect and compleat, this doth but ſatisfy its own debt, for God requires all this:

and

and if it do but ſatisfy its own debt, how can it diſcharge a former?

Beſides, beloved, how is it poſſible any righteouſneſs of man can lay iniquity upon Chriſt, when, beſides what we have already ſaid, there is new iniquity contracted againſt the Lord in all the righteouſneſs that men perform? This is an odd payment of debts, by payment ſtill to run more and more in debt; that our righteouſneſs may acquit us of former tranſgreſſions, and yet that itſelf contracts new tranſgreſſion to men, making it more than it was before; how can any man in ordinary ſenſe conceive this to be any way of diſcharge?

But ſome will ſay, Tho' our performances do not lay our iniquities upon Chriſt, yet they prevail with God, and move him with pity towards us, and ſtir him up to take our iniquities off from us, and lay them upon Chriſt: God cannot but melt, will ſome ſay, to ſee the tears of his people, the bitterneſs of their ſpirits, their crying, their earneſtneſs, and their ſorrows; theſe cannot but prevail with him to have compaſſion on them.

I know this is the general conceit of too many in the world: but, beloved, let me tell you, there is nothing in all creatures in the world that hath the leaſt prevalency with the Lord, let them do what they can. All our prayers, tears, faſtings, mournings, reluctancy, and fighting againſt our corruptions, move God not a jot to lay our ſins upon Chriſt; he is moved only from himſelf. If they move God, what muſt they move him to? If he be moved by any thing from man, he is moved according to the nature of the thing that

is

is done; if the nature of the thing produce evil effects, God muſt be moved to do evil to men; if good effects, if there be good in the things, they may move him to good: now I aſk, Is there good or evil in any thing men do? when they have ſinned, they pray, confeſs, mourn, and faſt; is there evil or good in theſe, looked upon in their own nature? No man can deny, but that there is abundance of iniquity in the beſt performances a man doth; and *God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity*. That which muſt move God to do good, muſt have a goodneſs in itſelf; all the motive, therefore, in the Lord is ſimply himſelf.

And that it may appear manifeſtly unto us, that the Lord doth not fetch motives from us, to lay our iniquities upon Chriſt, you ſhall find thro' the whole current of the goſpel, he takes a time of laying them upon him, when all the world may ſee there is no poſſibility that any creature ſhould move him to do it. Mark well, *Rom.* ix. 11. *The children being yet unborn, before they had done good or evil, it was ſaid,* Jacob *have I loved, and* Eſau *have I hated.* Before *Jacob* had done either good or evil, God's love was faſtened upon him, to ſhew that evil did not move him to reject, nor good perſuade him to love: while *Jacob* was in the womb God loved him, and what in him did move him to love him? he was conceived and born in ſin, as *David* confeſſeth of himſelf. What ſhould move God to love *Jacob*, and to put away his tranſgreſſion? *That it might be according to the purpoſe of election, not of him that worketh, but of God that ſheweth mercy. When I ſaw thee polluted in thy blood,* Ezek. xvi. 8. *I ſpread my ſkirt over thee,*

thee, and entered into covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine. Iſrael being now in blood, what was in him to perſuade God to ſwear to him, and to enter into covenant with him? By [*blood*] he means the filthineſs in the creature, and ſuch that no eye could pity it when God firſt ſet his love upon it. *If while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his ſon*; mark the expreſſion; there was no diſtance between *being enemies* and *reconciliation*; there was reconciliation even while enemies. What motive is there in an enemy, while ſuch, to perſuade reconciliation? *In due time Chriſt died for the ungodly*, ſaith the text. What motive can an ungodly man uſe to perſuade God to lay iniquity upon Chriſt, I ſay, conſidering him as ungodly?

But you will ſay, this is a way, and a high-way, to deſtroy all performances whatſoever. What, can they do nothing? to what purpoſe ſhould any man then fall upon any imployment?

Beloved, I am not ignorant how the apoſtle *Paul* himſelf was ſlandered, when he preached the free grace of God, ſimply out of his own bowels, without any motive from the creature, as if he allowed and maintained continuance in ſin, and breaking out into all manner of licentiouſneſs, becauſe grace abounded. I believe it hath been a charge upon the miniſters of the goſpel, ever ſince his time. Oh, if miniſters preach the free grace of God, and that what he doth, he doth for his own ſake, then farewel all obedience and performances; this opens a gap for all manner of idleneſs! Be not deceived, the Lord hath many ſpecial ends, for which he hath ſet up a courſe of uprightneſs

uprightneſs of converſation in the world, tho' there be no ſtroke in them to move him to ſhew mercy to them that walk thus uprightly; and it is but the ignorance of men to think, that holineſs in converſation muſt preſently fall to the ground, if it hath not a prevalency in it with God to do good to men. You know what the apoſtle ſaith, *Eph.* ii. 8, 9, 10. *You are ſaved by grace through faith, and that not of yourſelves, it is the gift of God; not of works, leſt any man ſhould boaſt; we are his workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, that we ſhould walk in them.*

A man would think that he contradicted himſelf; works have nothing to do in man's ſalvation, nor move God to ſave; *Not of works*, ſaith he, *but of grace*; yet *You are ordained unto good works:* theſe ſtand well together. The apoſtle *Paul* tells *Titus*, that men ſhould *ſtudy good works, for theſe are profitable unto men:* a man ſerves his generation, while he walketh in good works, and he doth good to them, among whom he lives: he ſerves not himſelf in all the good works he doth; for the Lord Chriſt hath fully ſerved his turn already; either we muſt make our performances Chriſt's, or elſe we muſt diſclaim them: what pride and arrogance is this! either men will rule the roaſt, or elſe they will not abide in the houſe! As every man hath his office in a family, ſo every thing in man hath its office: good works have very neceſſary offices in the family, but they were never ordained to be Chriſt's, much leſs to be God's. When Chriſt was tempted by the Phariſees about tribute, he makes this reply; *Give unto Cæſar, the things that are Cæſar's; and*

unto

unto God, the things that are God's. Let not the righteouſneſs of men incroach upon God, to take his work upon itſelf; I tell you, beloved, we know not the evil of theſe vain imaginations. Should the Lord deal with you according to your own hearts, that as your performances could lay your ſins upon Chriſt, and diſcharge you, ſo you ſhould be diſcharged, when would you ever do it? when (alas) inſtead of laying old ſins upon Chriſt by new performances, you do but add new ſins to the old; all our righteouſneſs, is but a renovation of new tranſgreſſions; *For all our righteouſneſſes*, he ſpeaks of every particular, *are as filthy rags, and a menſtruous cloth. Iſ.* lxiv. 5. Is this the way to eaſe a man of his ſin, or to get God to diſcharge him of it, to throw dirt anew in his face? Is this a way for a traitor to get the king's pardon, to come into his preſence, and throw poiſon in his face again? There is not one righteous action a man performs, but he therein anew throws dirt in the face of God by it: becauſe ſin, as the Wiſe Man ſaith, *Is abomination to the Lord.* Who knows the errors of his life, and the multitude of his failings in the beſt righteouſneſs he doth? Man's righteouſneſs may ſerve his own turn, but not God's. Though there be failing in our righteouſneſs, it may be *profitable to men*; but as there is, the eyes of God cannot away with it.

But you will ſay again, Chriſt makes our righteouſneſs to be accepted and pleaſing, by purging away all the filth that is in it; and then it may prevail with God, to lay our iniquities upon him.

I anſwer, it is true, Chriſt purges away all the filthineſs, both of righteouſneſs and unrighteouſneſs

neſs in believers; but not that their righteouſneſs may prevail with God to lay iniquity upon him; but that it may be accepted in him, the beloved, as ſervices. He himſelf was without ſpot, or the leaſt ſin, yet he takes not away iniquity by laying it upon himſelf; and if our righteouſneſs be made compleat, by his taking away the filth of it, and putting his own perfection on it; it is not that our iniquities may be laid upon him by it, but that it may be accepted in way of ſervice.

I ſhould go yet one ſtep higher, and let you know, that as it is the Lord alone that lays iniquity upon Chriſt, ſo not only all our performances are unable to do it; but even our faith itſelf doth not do it: ye may eaſily perceive, beloved, what I drive at, in all this diſcourſe, namely, to ſtrip the creature ſtark naked, leave it ſhiftleſs, and unable any way to help itſelf, that all the help that it receives, may appear to be of the free grace of God, merely, without it's concurrence in it. I ſay, therefore, it is not the faith of believers that lays their iniquities upon Chriſt. Suppoſe thou haſt committed many ſins, and they are apparent; thou wouldſt be rid of them, and hear of them no more; what is the way? Works have not power to do it, you will ſay; but faith is able to diſcharge the ſoul from all tranſgreſſions, and lay them upon Chriſt. But I muſt tell you, tho' God hath given many glorious fruits and effects to faith, and made it inſtrumental of much excellent and abundant conſolation to his people; yet hath he not honoured it with this, that it ſhould lay iniquity on Chriſt, or move God to do it.

This cannot be, you will ſay, for the apoſtle

Paul

Paul ſaith expreſsly, *I conclude that a man is juſtified by faith, and not by the works of the law*; therefore, we are juſtified by faith, and what is that, but to have ſins laid upon Chriſt, and we diſcharged of them?

I confeſs, it ſeems to be a ſtrong place at firſt, where the apoſtle ſpeaks of juſtification by faith, that conſiſts in the taking away of ſins from men; but give me leave to examine it a little, that faith encroach not upon God, and take that which is his own, and which he hath ſaid he will not give to another: I ſay, it is not the faith of a believer, tho' ever ſo ſtrong and powerful, that lays iniquity upon Chriſt; I ſhall give you a touch of it for the preſent: and to this purpoſe, it were very needful to conſider, what it is for a perſon to be juſtified; for upon that depends the knowledge of the very thing, *that lays iniquity on Chriſt*. Time will not give me leave to diſcourſe freely upon it; in ſhort, therefore, I will only ſhew what it is to be juſtified. I ſpeak of juſtification before God, and of his own juſtification of a man; and it muſt, of neceſſity, be granted of all men, that know what juſtification is in common ſenſe, that a perſon juſtified before God, is ſuch a one, who, when God himſelf makes ſearch to try him, whether he be guilty, or not guilty, of a crime, finds none upon him; and upon not finding any, he pronounceth him juſt. Let men ſay what they will, it is a flat contradiction for God to ſay, this is a juſt perſon in mine eyes, and yet I have ſome tranſgreſſions to charge upon him: how can God ſay he is juſt, and yet charge him with injuſtice done? There-

fore he muſt be fully freed from all injuſtice, or God cannot pronounce him a juſt perſon.

You will ſay, No man under heaven can then be juſtified? for God can charge all with tranſgreſſion.

I anſwer, God cannot. That his people have tranſgreſſed, is true; but he finds, in fact, that all their tranſgreſſions are already ſatisfied for by his own Son, tho' the ſins were afterwards committed; yet upon payment made beforehand, he charges not ſin upon them, having charged it upon Chriſt already, and taken the full payment of him for it. There is no perſon under heaven, that God pronounceth juſt, but he therein ſays, I have not one ſin to charge upon him. It is true, I find many crimes committed by him, but alſo I find, that my Son hath diſcharged them already, and he hath given me good ſatisfaction for them: now then, this being the juſtification of a ſinner before God; how is it poſſible, that faith can diſcharge a perſon from all iniquity, that God himſelf, upon ſtrict ſearch, ſhould find none to be charged upon him? How can faith do it? Suppoſe a perſon had no tranſgreſſion for God to find, till he believes, yet this believing brings tranſgreſſion with it, enough for God to find him guilty; that itſelf is ſinful; *I believe, Lord, help my unbelief:* there is a mixture of unbelief in the faith of all believers; and there are many weakneſſes in it; and how can that juſtify a perſon, that is not able to juſtify itſelf? Tho' Chriſt was like to us in all things, yet *ſin was excepted:* muſt he himſelf be free from ſin to juſtify us, that he might purchaſe our redemption, and ſhall faith juſtify us that is not free from

from ſin? If faith juſtifies a perſon, what muſt juſtify faith? for that muſt have ſomething to juſtify it, being not able to juſtify itſelf.

But, you will ſay, this is but argumentation; the apoſtle *Paul* ſaith, (*Rom.* v. 1.) *That being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God*; and ſince the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, *we are juſtified by faith*, we muſt not diſpute againſt it.

I will anſwer in brief, and deſire one thing of you, and that is to conſult *Beza* upon this place; he renders the words out of the original, *Being juſtified by faith we have peace with God*, without any ſtop from the firſt to laſt. Our tranſlators render the words thus, *Being juſtified by faith*, and then put a comma; but as *Beza* renders them (who is accounted a moſt ſincere renderer of the original) he makes no ſtop: and, if that be true, why may not they be as well rendered thus; *Being juſtified, by faith we have peace with God?* And ſo aſcribe juſtification to Chriſt, as a thing done before, and let faith have reference to our peace; being juſtified by Chriſt, by faith we come to have peace with God; which ſtands current with the analogy of faith, and truth of the goſpel: *For it is God that juſtifieth*, Rom. viii. 34. Juſtification is truly and properly the work of God himſelf, and cannot be the work of faith [t].

But, *Secondly*, ſuppoſe the words to run as they are commonly rendered; I anſwer, then are we to diſtinguiſh in faith two things; there is the *act* of believing, and the *object* on which we believe; and ſo the words may be underſtood thus, *Being juſti-*

[t] Faith is never ſaid to juſtify, nor are we juſtified by it as an act or work, but by the object of it, Chriſt, and his righteouſneſs, who is ſometimes called faith, *Gal.* iii. 23, 24, 25.

fied by the righteouſneſs of faith, or by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt which we believe, *we have peace with God*; and ſo aſcribe our juſtification to the object of our believing, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and not to the act of believing. The truth is, beloved, the act of believing is a work, and as much ours, as our fear, prayer, and love are; and the apoſtle ſhould contradict himſelf when he ſaith, *We are ſaved by grace, thro' faith, not of works*, if he mean the act of faith; he might as well have ſaid, we are not juſtified by works, but we are juſtified by them.

Finally, to draw towards a concluſion, I anſwer thus; You may conſider juſtification in a double ſenſe, and that, according to the opinion of our divines, there is juſtification in heaven, and in a man's conſcience. Juſtification in heaven, is God's act alone; juſtification in the conſciences of men, is the manifeſtation of that act of God to them, by which a man comes to know, and conſequently to rejoice in it; and ſo you may read the words thus, *Being juſtified by faith*, that is, thro' faith, having the juſtification of God evidenced and manifeſted to our ſpirits, *we have peace with him* [u]. And, beloved, you ſhall find this to be a very ſolid and genuine interpretation of the words, and agreeable to the ſcriptures; for peace and joy are always appropriated to perſons believing; as much as to ſay, the act of juſtification in heaven, tho' perfectly done, is yet ſecret in the breaſt of God alone, till he gives perſons faith, that beholds the grace of God, that brings the glad tidings of juſtification to the ſoul, and ſo it rejoyceth in it; therefore

[u] Of this ſee more in the note on page 143.

therefore the apoſtle prays after this manner, *The Lord fill you with all joy and peace in believing.* So that it is true, we have not the comfort; we cannot ſay particularly to our ſpirits, God hath juſtified me, and I rejoice in this, till we believe; becauſe faith is made, by the Lord, to be the *evidence of things not ſeen*, as in *Heb.* xi. 1. And that is the proper work that God hath given to believing, not to effect any thing to the good of a man, but only to be the witneſs of that good to his ſpirit; and ſo give light to that which was ſecret before. So that ſtill it remains, that the laying of iniquity itſelf upon Chriſt, is the Lord's act, and his only; our faith ſeeth what the Lord hath done; and, when God gives us to believe, faith manifeſts it to us, and ſo our ſouls come to have peace. In ſum, therefore, beloved, God lays, Chriſt bears, and faith ſees iniquity laid upon him. God, thro' Chriſt, perfect this work in us, that ſo, faith ſeeing, *we may have all joy and peace in believing.*

SERMON XXI.

To lay our Sins on Chriſt, is the Lord's Prerogative only.

ISAIAH liii. 6.

And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

I Find no ſcripture ſo punctually and fully revealing the riches of the grace of God to men, as this that I have now read unto you, ſurpaſſing others depending upon it; and I find no truth more clouded, to the trouble of God's people, than thoſe truths that concern the grace of God to men; which hath exceedingly provoked me to improve that talent I have received, to communicate the mind of the Lord, as fully as I may, to them.

Of this truth, upon ſundry occaſions, I have ſpoken ſeveral things out of theſe words; each word containing a ſpecial obſervation by itſelf; every word hath its weight, and ſpeaks admirable grace to the ſons of men. God not only puniſhes Chriſt for men, but he lays the very iniquities of men upon him. The purity of God naturally can never take pleaſure in a filthy veſſel. Should Chriſt be puniſhed over and over again for the ſins of men; yet if, for all this, they lay upon themſelves, God muſt abhor them. There can be no expectance of a ſmile, from the face of God, upon

upon any creature in the world, till it be all fair; and this cannot be, till all ſpots of ſin be taken from them; and this taking away of the filthineſs of the creature, is not a kind of ſuppoſed taking of it away, but is a real act of God; he makes Chriſt as very a ſinner as the creature himſelf was [w]: *He was made ſin for us*, 2 Cor. v. 21. The Lord laid our very iniquities themſelves upon him: this is the greateſt grace the ſoul can have comfort in, in this life, that iniquity is done away; and, therefore, it concerns all that hear ſuch admirable tidings, to know from whence it comes, who undertakes this great work, to diſcharge a poor ſinner, and to lay all its iniquities on Chriſt. Had all the creatures in the world undertaken, with all their ſtrength, to lay them on him, it would have broke the back of them all, ſo much as to lift at ſin to lay it upon him; therefore the grace of the Lord is evident in this, that it is he himſelf that laid iniquity upon him. No undertakers in heaven and earth could have brought this great work to paſs, but the Lord alone. It is ſtrange, that Chriſt ſhould be enabled to undertake ſo much as he did; yet God did not oblige him to take and lay our iniquities upon himſelf. Chriſt learned obedience in this, and waited the pleaſure of his Father to lay iniquity upon him, and doth not lay it on himſelf; *I came not to do my own will*, (ſaith he) *but the will of him that ſent me*: nay, Chriſt was not the firſt motive to it; but the thoughts of

[w] That is, by imputation, which is a real act of God, and by which all the ſins of the ſinner are put upon Chriſt, ſo that he, ſtanding in his ſtead, is reckoned in the eye of juſtice as what the ſinner himſelf is. See the notes on page 11 and 16.

God's own love towards poor creatures, were the motives to himſelf to give him to bear their ſins; and if Chriſt himſelf doth not lay iniquity upon himſelf, much leſs doth the righteouſneſs of man lay it on him. It is not all the prayers, the tears, the faſting, the repentance, tho' ever ſo perfect and compleat, that lays any one iniquity upon Chriſt; it is the Lord alone that does it; nay, none of theſe performances have the leaſt moving power in them to perſwade him to it; the Lord moves himſelf to do it: all our ſervices are for other purpoſes; they have no prevalency with him at all, no, our faith itſelf lays not our iniquities on Chriſt; but, as I ſaid, the Lord lays, Chriſt bears, our faith doth but ſee and make evident that, in time, which before was hid and not ſeen.

We cannot amplify the particulars ſo largely as neceſſity requires; I muſt proceed to what remains behind. Now, beloved, I ſhall ſhew you clearly, I hope, that it is not to be imagined, that any thing in the world can poſſibly lay iniquity upon Chriſt, but only the Lord himſelf; for the clearing of which, I deſire to take ſome ſpecialities into conſideration.

1. None in the world hath any thing to do with iniquity, to diſpoſe of it, but only the Lord; and therefore none can lay it upon Chriſt, but only he. For the better clearing of which, you muſt underſtand, that iniquity, or ſin (as in 1 *John* iii. 4.) *is the tranſgreſſion of the law: for where there is no law, there is no tranſgreſſion*, as the apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks: the meaning is this, tranſgreſſion is a ſwerving or going aſtray from the pleaſure of God revealed in his law; nothing is tranſgreſſion,

tranſgreſſion, but what is againſt him, and his mind revealed to men: and whereas in a ſubordination there may be a tranſgreſſion againſt men, one againſt another; yet all ſuch tranſgreſſion hath its denomination, not as man's, but as God's will is tranſgreſſed. As for inſtance, *Thou ſhalt not commit adultery*; in the breach of this, here is a tranſgreſſion of a man againſt a man; for one man to commit adultery with another man's wife, is an offence againſt her huſband; yet this were not properly a tranſgreſſion, if it were not a tranſgreſſion of the law God made againſt it; *For where there is no law, there is no tranſgreſſion.* To come to the purpoſe in hand, tranſgreſſion is only againſt God; for which cauſe, *David*, tho' he committed adultery with *Uriah*'s wife, and ſlew him with the ſword of his enemy, and therein tranſgreſſed againſt thoſe perſons; yet *David* riſeth to the fountain of tranſgreſſion, and ſo to the true nature of it, when he confeſſeth, *Pſal.* li. 4. *Againſt thee only have I ſinned, and done evil in thy ſight.*

And you ſhall find, when *Samuel* had been ſet up to be judge over *Iſrael*, and the people began to deſpiſe and reject him, becauſe they would have a king, as other people had; there was a ſinning againſt *Samuel* in ſubordination; yet the Lord ſaith, *They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me.* They ſinned againſt God principally, and *Samuel* ſubordinately, becauſe they ſinned againſt God's ordinance; *Samuel* being ſubſtituted by God over them.

If ſin then be againſt God, againſt whom it is committed, then it is only in his power to diſpoſe of it at his pleaſure. Suppoſe a man owe a debt

to

to another, it is not in the power of a third party to diſpoſe of this debt as he pleaſeth, but in the creditor himſelf only; if a creditor ſhould arreſt a debtor, and make him pay, or lie by it himſelf, it is not in the power of any other, to take ſurety in the ſtead of this debtor; the creditor may take a ſurety if he will, and it is at his pleaſure, whether a ſurety ſhall ſtand, or be accepted, or no. Every tranſgreſſion of a man is a debt to the Lord; and, as it is a debt to him, ſo it is only in his power, and at his pleaſure to diſpoſe of it; whether or no, perſons ſhall lie by it till they have paid the utmoſt farthing themſelves; or whether he will take a ſurety to ſtand in their room, and pay the debt for them. From hence are theſe words, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and whom I will I harden*: as much as to ſay, I will take a ſurety for as many as I liſt, and none for ſo many as I pleaſe; ſuch and ſuch, I will take a ſurety for; and therefore you ſhall find, that in this buſineſs of laying iniquity upon Chriſt, he goes under the notion of a mediator; he is the mediator of a better covenant, or teſtament: as much as to ſay, Chriſt himſelf will not take upon him, to diſpoſe of the ſins committed againſt the father; he indeed mediates with him; he is contented, if the Father pleaſe to make him a ſurety, he will ſee him paid. A mediator is one that comes between men, to over-rule them if poſſible; ſo Chriſt deals with the Father, he will become the ſurety of a better covenant, or teſtament; and accordingly, be the ſurety for ſuch as God ſeeth good, and no other; and the reſt they ſhall, they muſt lie by it. And therefore you ſhall ſee, that for ſo many as God

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is contented, Chriſt ſhould be their ſurety; he is ſo far from diſpoſing of their ſins upon himſelf, that tho' he paid the utmoſt farthing, and the Father was fully ſatisfied with it; yet he acknowledged for all that, that this very ſuretyſhip of his, inſtead of others, was an act of grace, and an act of grace to himſelf; *Thine they were, and thou gaveſt them me.* How was it a gift? Did not Chriſt pay well for them? Did not he lay down the price of his blood, a ſatisfactory price? Yea, he did; yet, *Thou gaveſt them me*, ſaith Chriſt: how ſo, will you ſay? I anſwer, God might have choſen, whether Chriſt ſhould come to offer ſatisfaction, or whether he would accept of it made by him the ſurety; in that he would accept of a price, there was a gift.

2. It muſt only be the Lord's work to diſpoſe of the ſins of men, to lay them upon Chriſt; nothing elſe could do it; none but the Lord could qualify and fit Chriſt to bear the ſins of men: none but he alone could do it. Suppoſe it were in the power of the creature to lay iniquity of men upon Chriſt, what could this avail, except Chriſt, when it is laid upon him, ſhould become able to bear it, and not ſink under it, when it was laid upon him; therefore none could lay it with effect, but God alone. There are two things that are exceeding neceſſary, that iniquities might be laid beneficially upon him, and all the world could do neither of them.

1. That he ſhould have a body, wherein to bear iniquity.

2. Having a body, that he ſhould be ſteeled above natural ſtrength; that that body prepared, ſhould not ſhrink under ſuch a weight.

Now

Now this is the Lord's own work; nay, all the world could never reach it but he, to furniſh Chriſt with both theſe; and you ſhall find both of them intimated in one expreſſion, in *Heb.* x. 6, 7. *When he came into the world, he ſaid, burnt-offerings and ſacrifices thou wouldeſt not, but a body haſt thou prepared me:* they are both intimated in theſe words, *A body haſt thou prepared me:* where you ſhall find, that it is the Lord himſelf that furniſhes him with this body.

1. There muſt be a body, that he might come to do the will of God; *A body haſt thou prepared me, that I ſhould do thy will, O God!* that is, do it in a body. And, 2. note, that this body is not an ordinary one, but prepared; therefore in the margent it is, a body haſt thou fitted me; as a man fits a caſe to a thing to be put into it; that builds a houſe, a fit habitation for himſelf to dwell in; or a fort for ſome to be fortified in it, he prepares it accordingly; ſo, *A body haſt thou prepared me*; that is, a body haſt thou fitted for me, and ſteeled it, that it may be of more than natural ſtrength to bear the ſins of men. The divine nature is incapable of bearing tranſgreſſion, therefore there muſt be a body given and prepared, that may be ſubject to bear; and this body, becauſe the weight of ſin is infinite, and enough to preſs an ordinary one into hell, muſt be ſteeled with an infinite ſtrength above nature, that it may ſtand ſtedfaſtly under it, and firm to the work; therefore the Pſalmiſt tells us, *Thou ſpakeſt in viſion to thy holy one, thou haſt laid help upon one that is mighty:* it is not an ordinary body, that this help muſt be laid upon, but muſt be mighty; therefore Chriſt tells

tells us, in *John* iv. 34. that he himſelf had received the ſpirit, not by meaſure; there was more ſtrength given to him, than ordinary ſtrength, that is common to the creature.

Now, beloved, except any creature in the world could thus furniſh Chriſt, and ſteel him that he might not ſink, to what purpoſe ſhould any lay iniquity upon him? and therefore in *Iſa.* xlii. 16. you ſhall find, that he doth not only call us out to behold his ſervant whom he hath choſen, but he tells us, how he diſpoſes of him, that he may be for our uſe; *Behold my ſervant whom I uphold,---I will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant to the people.* I have kept thee as well as given thee; the Father muſt help Chriſt in this work, as well as give him; there muſt be furniſhing with abilities to the employment, as well as a calling forth to it; to what purpoſe is it to call a multitude of people to reſiſt a common enemy? What uſe will they be of, except they be furniſhed with arms and ammunition, and all things fitting for the ſervice they are called out unto? If iniquity be laid upon Chriſt, and he not furniſhed to bear it, to what purpoſe is it? He will ſhrink under the burthen, and we periſh in his ſinking. It is not of ſmall conſequence therefore to know, that the Lord hath laid iniquity upon him.

3. None but the Lord alone can lay iniquity upon Chriſt, in that none but he hath ſo much power over, and intereſt in Chriſt, to prevail with him to be content to bear it: all the world could never have won Chriſt to put his ſhoulders to undergo ſuch a burthen, but only the power of the Lord prevailed with him. Beloved, it is not ſuch

a light weight, to be under the weight of all the ſins of all the creatures at once, that Chriſt ſhould make ſo light of it, as to take it upon himſelf. This one complaint of Chriſt may reſolve us of the weight of tranſgreſſion that was upon him; *Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me*; and he ſweat drops of blood as water, becauſe of that agony his ſoul was in, by reaſon of ſin that was then upon him; and it made him cry out, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* ſo heavy was it upon him. Who in the world ever had, hath, or ever ſhall have, ſo much intereſt in Chriſt, to prevail with him to take the ſins of men upon himſelf, if they could lay them upon him? Tho' the elect of God reap an unſearchable fruit from hence, yet it is not they, nor their eaſe, which is the prime motive which prevailed with Chriſt to bear them; but that which chiefly prevailed with him, was the pleaſuring of his Father: he knew well enough how hot the heart of God was ſet upon this, that the iniquities of men ſhould be borne by him, and carried away from them, and they diſcharged: now, for the pleaſuring of him, he was content to do it: and you ſhall find much of Chriſt's diſcourſe, and of the prophets that ſpake of him, tending to this; that the eye of Chriſt was principally upon the pleaſuring of his Father in bearing the ſins of men: in *Iſa.* liii. 10. 11. 12. three times you ſhall find it expreſſed, *The pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand: he ſhall ſee the travail of his ſoul and be ſatisfied: and it pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him*: ſtill you ſee the eye of Chriſt was upon the ſatisfying of his Father,

ther, and pleaſuring of him in that he did; that his pleaſure ſhould proſper in the work, therefore the hand of Chriſt takes it; that the Father be ſatisfied with this, he is content to be in travail in his ſoul, and to bear iniquity; in that it pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him, therefore was he content to be broken. All the world could never prevail with Chriſt to undergo it, had it not been that he might give his Father content. It is worth your obſervation, what is recorded in *Heb.* x. 5, 6, 7. mark it well, I pray: when Chriſt comes into the world, he ſaith, *Sacrifice and burnt-offerings thou wouldeſt not, in burnt-offerings and ſin-offerings thou hadſt no pleaſure; then ſaid I, Lo, I come:* obſerve his motive to come into the world, namely to do that which burnt offerings and ſacrifices could not do. *There was a remembrance of ſin,* ſaith the apoſtle, *every year, ſince the blood of bulls and goats could not take away ſin;* therefore the Lord was not pleaſed and contented with burnt-offerings and ſacrifices; upon this, ſaith Chriſt, *Lo, I come;* as if he had ſaid, ſeeing they cannot give thee content, that thou mayeſt have pleaſure, lo, I come to do the work thoroughly, that thou mayeſt be ſatisfied.

4. None but the Lord could lay iniquity upon Chriſt, becauſe, none but he could give him a fit and proportionable reward for bearing it. It is fit every one ſhould have conſideration for the work he doth; and it is moſt certain, Chriſt in undertaking to bear the ſins of men, hath an eye to a proportionable conſideration for it; now none but the Lord could give him it; therefore, none elſe could win him to lay iniquity upon him, in *Heb.* xii.

xii. 2, 3. it is plain, that Chriſt had an eye to ſome good conſideration; *Looking to Jeſus, the author and finiſher of our faith, who, for the joy that was ſet before him, endured the croſs, and deſpiſed the ſhame, and now ſits at the right hand of God:* He did not only ſuffer, but alſo deſpiſed the ſhame that ſin brought upon him; for he being made ſin, became alſo a ſhame, and he deſpiſed that; and what was that which moved him to it? It was joy; and what was that joy? *He ſits at the right hand of God his Father*; and who could thus reward Chriſt but the Lord? And, beloved, you ſhall find, that God, when he puts him on to bear the ſins of men, he propoſes rewards to him for his encouragement: in *Pſal.* ii. 6,--8. where he ſpeaks of anointing of Chriſt to be his *king upon his holy hill*; *Aſk of me*, ſaith he, *and I will give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmoſt parts of the earth for thy poſſeſſion:* here is that which God will give to Chriſt, and wherefore doth he make this deed of gift to him, but that it may be a reward to him for his ſufferings, and ſo encourage him to the work? And for this purpoſe let us conſider that paſſage in *Phil.* ii. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. *Who, being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God; but took upon him the form of a ſervant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs:* (mark what follows) *Therefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of JESUS, every knee ſhould bow, both of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue ſhould confeſs that Jeſus is the Lord.* Here you ſee expreſsly, how the

the Lord rewards him for this very thing, that he *became obedient to death, even the death of the croſs*, while *he thought it no robbery to be equal with God.*

And, indeed, beloved, no marvel that the Lord will propoſe ſuch a reward to Chriſt, to make him ſatisfaction for the taking upon him the ſins of men; for conſider men as they were to bear their own tranſgreſſions themſelves, and as ſome are yet to bear them; alas! what payment was the Lord likely to have! payment like that of broken debtors: he muſt have given time, to all eternity, before he could have his debt paid; whereas Chriſt, coming into the world, makes round, preſent, and ready payment; he pays all at once: and is not this a good reparation? When as a debtor is broke, and the creditor is to ſtay many years for his money, and take it by piece-meal too, would it not be thank-worthy for one to come now, and pay down the full ſum upon the nail, ready money? When Chriſt came into the world he paid down all at once; God hath all from him (as they ſay) in ready caſh. From hence there is a tranſlating of the debt from us, broken debtors, to one that is mighty; he bears the burthen, and pays the debt for us; the Lord is ſatisfied to his content, and he requites him for it. Now if all that we ever did, or can do, be not a requital of him, how can we expect that we ſhould lay our iniquities upon Chriſt?

Now for application. If it be the Lord himſelf that lays our iniquities upon Chriſt, it is but meet and right that he ſhould have *the praiſe of the glory of his own grace*; and that nothing in the world ſhould go away with the praiſe of it from

him. I remember a complaint of the poet, who, it ſeems, had made ſome verſes that carried ſome credit with them, and ſome foiſter had taken it upon himſelf; "I have made the verſes, and ano-"ther hath the honour of them; as the bee makes "honey, and another hath the fruit of it." Beloved, it may be the juſt complaint of the Lord to the ſons of men; I have laid the iniquities of you all upon Chriſt, and every thing almoſt runs away with the honour of it; as if ſomething elſe did eaſe you of the burthen of them, and I am neglected. Now ſo long as you have theſe vain conceits in you, that any thing you do becomes your eaſe, and the lightening of the burthen of your ſins, they will go away with the praiſe that is due to God. To whomſoever we apprehend ourſelves beholding, as we ſay, for ſuch a courteſy, ſuch a one ſhall go away with the praiſe of it. 2 *Sam.* xvi. 1, 2. I remember how *Ziba*, the ſervant of *Mephiboſheth*, *Saul*'s ſon, came to *David* with the ſtolen goods of his maſter, and pretended that it was his own courteſy to *David*, that he had brought ſo many mules, and a large quantity of proviſion; *David* aſked for his maſter, he belies his maſter, and tells him he abides at *Jeruſalem*, hoping that *Iſrael* would ſet the crown upon his head; but mark it well, whilſt that *David* is poſſeſt that *Ziba* is he that hath done him a courteſy, he ſhall go away with the glory of it, and *Mephiboſheth* ſhall be neglected; and *David* gives all the land of *Mephiboſheth* to *Ziba* upon this miſtake, and ſo he carried away all the praiſe of the courteſy from *Mephiboſheth*. And ſo it is moſt true, beloved, as long as we reckon our own holy duties,

duties, repentance, and enlargement in prayer, &c. as the bringers of refreſhment to our ſpirits, and the unloaders of our hearts from our tranſgreſſions, that are the burthen of the ſoul; ſo long theſe are exalted above meaſure. Hence theſe ſtrange epithets and expreſſions are fixed to them; "Oh! "the omnipotency of repentance! and of meeting "with God in faſting and humiliation! oh! the "prevalency of tears to waſh away ſin!" They ſuppoſing that theſe eaſe us of the weight of ſin, go away with the glory. Oh! who is omnipotent but the God of heaven! What waſhes away the ſins of men but the blood of Chriſt? ſhall we give the glory to *Ziba*, that is due to *Mephiboſheth*? In 2 *Sam.* xix. 24. you ſhall hear how *Mephiboſheth* makes his apology for himſelf, and pleads his ſincerity to the king, and declares how his ſervant had abuſed him; and then *David* reſtored half his lands again to him; but yet *Ziba* muſt ſhare with him ſtill.

Oh! beloved, I deſire you to deal more equally with God; let him have all the praiſe; let not *Ziba* and *Mephiboſheth* divide the land; let not your performances ſhare with God in the praiſe of his grace, in laying iniquities upon Chriſt.

It is God alone that lays your iniquities upon Chriſt, and your performances cozen you, while they tell you, that they eaſe you of your burthen, and lay it upon him. Oh! turn them out, and let them not ſhare with the Lord in the praiſe due to his name.

It was the ſin of the *Jews*, when they had gotten a prey, they preſently thought it was their own nets and drags that got it; and therefore (ſaith

the prophet) *They ſacrifice to their own nets, and offer incenſe to their drags.* Beloved, you will offer incenſe to your performances, as long as you go to them to be your deliverers. The deliverance from the weight of your ſin, is not from the virtue of any thing that you do; it is the Lord alone that lays iniquity upon Chriſt; and, therefore, let him alone carry away the praiſe and glory of it; let nothing rob him of it.

In paradiſe the Lord made a large grant to the ſons of men in *Adam*; *Of all the trees in the garden thou ſhalt eat, ſave only the tree of knowledge of good and evil:* he reſerved that one tree to himſelf, and but that one; he gave him of his bounty to eat of every one beſides; and yet ſuch was his itching humour, that of all others, fain would he be meddling there, till he brought ruin upon his own head. In the goſpel, all our grants are large; *All are yours, and you are Chriſt's, and Chriſt is God's: God ſpared not his own Son, but gave him up to death for us all*; nay more, *I am your God, and you are my people.* He thinks not much to give his Son, nor himſelf, to his people; there is but one thing he keeps to himſelf, *Iſa.* xlii. 8. *My glory will I not give to another, nor my praiſe to graven images*; all that the Lord reſerves to himſelf, is but *the praiſe and glory of his own grace.* Oh! pilfer not that from God, which, when you have it, will do you no good in the world! and ſeeing he will have only this, do not grudge it him. It is not out of niggardlineſs that God keeps this to himſelf, for in *Iſa.* xlii. 6. you ſhall find that he is bountiful enough for all that; *I will give thee for a covenant to the people, to open the blind eyes,*

eyes, and to bring the priſoners out of priſon: that will do us more good; and, that he may do us good, his own Son ſhall be given for a covenant; but *my glory, that ſhall not be given to another*, as it follows preſently after. Oh! therefore, let not your performances, be they ever ſo exact, aſpire ſo high, as to uſurp that glory that is due to the Lord alone!

But, ſome will be ready to ſay, tho' our performances do not lay our iniquities upon Chriſt, and, therefore, ought not to have the glory of it; yet, ſurely, the Lord requires theſe duties, that he may lay our iniquities upon Chriſt, and ſo honour our ſervices as the motives by which he is pleaſed to lay them upon him.

Do not miſtake, beloved, performances are not only not the principal efficients, but they are not ſo much as the inſtruments, or means, of laying the iniquities of men upon Chriſt; nay, not as motives: and it is a groſs miſtake, (I would the truth might ſhine more clear, that I might undeceive men;) men run away with vain imaginations, that the renewing of faith and repentance is a new laying of iniquity upon Chriſt; or, that the Lord anew lays it on him, when we renew theſe duties; I ſay, this is a groſs miſtake; for God doth not lay iniquity upon Chriſt upon the performance of them; nay, theſe have no ſtroke in it. I would fain know this one thing, Chriſt being now in heaven, whether he now, before the throne of his Father, actually bears the iniquities of men? Doth Chriſt ſtand as a ſinner before the face of God in glory? certainly no unclean thing ſhall enter into the heavenly *Jeruſalem*; and if, upon the renewing our repent-

ance and faith, our ſins we commit are carried from us, and laid upon him in heaven, then he ſtands beſmeared with the ſins of men as in heaven, in glory. One ſin is committed at this inſtant by the believer, another at that, and another at a third; and ſo, from the firſt moment, to the end of the world, there is a continual ſucceſſion of acts of ſin by believers. Well, what do men do? They believe and repent; and what do theſe do? When men believe and repent, (you ſay) they lay iniquity upon Chriſt, and then it is upon him.

How can it poſſibly enter into the heart of any man, that he that is ſet down in glory with the Father, having done his work, finiſhed tranſgreſſion, and put an end to ſin, by one ſacrifice upon the croſs, ſhould yet ſtill bear the iniquities of men upon him, before him?

Beſides, beloved, I beſeech you conſider this one thing, if Chriſt hath iniquity laid upon him now, and hereafter, as men believe and repent, what courſe muſt he take to rid himſelf of it? If there be iniquity upon him, there muſt be a way for him to rid himſelf of it, and it muſt be taken off moſt certainly: but when the Lord laid iniquity upon Chriſt, he, by one offering, did ſo perfect the work, that he ſits down, (ſaith the apoſtle in *Heb.* x. 12.) *For ever at the right hand of God: and there remaineth now no more ſacrifice for ſin. Without ſhedding of blood, there is no remiſſion.* Wherever ſin is found, there muſt be ſhedding of blood, or elſe there is no remiſſion; and if ſin be laid upon Chriſt, there muſt be a new ſhedding of blood before it can be taken away.

And therefore you muſt conſider, that this laying of ſin upon Chriſt, is a buſineſs, that God hath done

done long ago, and not now to be done; for the text ſaith not, God lays, or will lay, iniquity upon him; but hath laid it on him: therefore, ſaith the apoſtle in *Heb.* ix. 28. *Chriſt was once offered to take away the ſins of many; and unto them that look for him, he ſhall appear the ſecond time without ſin unto ſalvation.* Chriſt himſelf muſt appear without ſin, that he might have power to prevail with the Lord: it is obſervable, that while ſin lay upon him, and he was forced to bear it, he himſelf was forſaken of the Father.

In *Dan.* ix. 24. *Seventy weeks ſhall be determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finiſh tranſgreſſion, and to make an end of ſin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlaſting righteouſneſs*; mark, I pray you, theſe *ſeventy weeks* were expired, when Chriſt was upon the croſs, then ſin was finiſhed, and therefore he ſaid, *It is finiſhed*; therefore, the laying of iniquity upon Chriſt, is not a new thing, now to be done; neither is it your faith and repentance that lay it upon him, but it is a thing done long ago: therefore caſt off that groſs conceit, as if God did daily lay your ſins upon Chriſt, as you daily renew your faith and repentance.

But what do they then ſerve for, will you ſay?

I anſwer, They ſerve for this purpoſe; the Lord is pleaſed when he hath freely, and of his own accord, pardoned the ſins of men, having laid them upon Chriſt, to reveal himſelf in this his grace, and manifeſt to them that which he hath done long before, when they meet with him in prayer, faſting, and ordinances; he is pleaſed to manifeſt in them to us, what he hath already done, and

not that they are yet to be done, much leſs that theſe things do them.

Well, is it the Lord that lays iniquity upon Chriſt? Then behold matter of admirable conſolation: none in the world like this, the Lord hath laid it; if any thing elſe had, but he alone, men were undone for ever. God is unchangeable, *I am the Lord, I change not*, ſaith he, *therefore ye ſons of* Jacob *are not conſumed.* That which the Lord doth, is for ever, not to be revoked and altered again; that which the creature doth is changeable, but God changes not.

But I muſt haſten. In the laſt place, is it then the Lord that lays iniquity upon Chriſt, then take it off from him who dare, and bring it back again to the poor ſoul, from whom the Lord hath taken it, and laid it upon him: who art thou that dareſt to diſpute againſt God? Hath not the potter power over the clay, to make of one lump a veſſel of honour, and another of diſhonour? If the Lord is pleaſed of his good will and free-grace, to make thee a veſſel unto honour, by purging thee thoroughly from ſin, and laying it upon Chriſt, wilt thou diſpute with God, and ſay, thy iniquities are not laid upon him?

In *Gen.* xlviii. *Joſeph* brings his two ſons, *Manaſſes* and *Ephraim*, to *Jacob* his father, to be bleſſed by him before he died; he brings *Manaſſes*, and ſets on *Jacob*'s right hand, and *Ephraim* on his left hand; but *Jacob*, when he began to bleſs them, changed his hand, and put his left hand upon *Manaſſes* the eldeſt, and his right hand upon *Ephraim* the youngeſt: Mark, what ſaith *Joſeph* then? *Not ſo, my father, for this is the eldeſt*;

eldeſt; *yea, I know it my ſon, I know it*, ſaith *Jacob*, *very well*; that is not the purpoſe, Manaſſes *ſhall be great, but his younger brother ſhall be greater than he*: *Joſeph* would needs correct his father, thinking he did not prudently in that he did, and that his hand was not placed right, and therefore he would be mending it. Juſt ſo we judge of God's proceedings, in the diſpenſation of his grace to men; we think that he deals imprudently, when he lays his right hand of mercy upon the head of a notorious ſinner, an enemy; and his left hand of ſeverity upon an elder brother, a ſincere man, one that walks uprightly: not ſo, my father, ſay men, that is a wicked man, a notorious ſinner; this is an honeſt, righteous, and godly man; this is the elder, lay thy right hand of grace upon him: I know very well, (ſaith God) what they are; it is my pleaſure, the youngeſt ſhall have the bleſſing, and the eldeſt go without it; *You are righteous in your generation*, (ſaith Chriſt) *but the publicans and harlots ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven, and yourſelves ſhall be ſhut out.* Beloved, let the Lord lay his hand where he pleaſe, and let him diſpoſe of iniquity as he ſeeth good, and lay whoſe ſins he pleaſe upon Chriſt: *Even while we were enemies we were reconciled:* Let no man therefore look upon human prudence, nor diſcourſe according to reaſon; but let us look upon the act of God in diſpenſing of his grace, as he who is wiſdom itſelf, orders it; and know that he which cannot err, diſpoſeth of iniquity, and layeth it upon Chriſt; and whom he bleſſeth, is, and ſhall be bleſſed. I may ſpeak of the act of God, in laying men's ſins upon Chriſt once paſſed, and ſet forth

forth the unchangeableneſs of it, by that act of *Iſaac* bleſſing *Jacob*, tho' *Jacob* got the bleſſing by deceit from his father, making him to believe, that he was his eldeſt ſon; and *Eſau* coming in afterwards for the bleſſing, ſaith *Iſaac*, *I have bleſſed him, and he ſhall be bleſſed*: ſhall *Iſaac*, a man, ſtand to what he hath done, tho' gotten from him by a meer cheat; and ſhall the Lord change in what he hath done, having laid iniquity upon Chriſt, ſhall he take it off again? *He is not a man that he ſhould lie, nor the ſon of man, that he ſhould repent*; and therefore, beloved, you may take up that glorious challenge of the apoſtle in *Rom.* viii. *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that juſtifieth.* There is the ground of all; ſo ſay to your own ſpirits, who ſhall call me to account for my ſins? Who ſhall lay them to my charge? Who will make me bear them on my own back? It is God himſelf hath taken them off, and diſcharged me: *It is God that juſtifieth me*; if man had juſtified me, he might have been miſtaken; had he pronounced me innocent, I might have borne my ſins ſtill. *Chriſt died, or is rather riſen again*: wherefore, who ſhall lay any thing to our charge? And ſo you may trample over all the accuſations of ſatan upon this very conſideration, that God *hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

SERMON

SERMON XXII.

Our Sins already laid on Chriſt.

ISAIAH liii. 6.

And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

THE laſt day, as you may remember, we took notice of the author of this grace, *Of laying iniquity upon Chriſt:* it is the Lord's own act; none but he laid it on him; Chriſt took not the office of prieſthood upon himſelf, but as he was called of God. The office of his prieſthood was the bearing of ſin; that was the prime buſineſs of the high-prieſt to repreſent all the people, and to enter into the holy of holies to bear their ſins before the Lord. *No man takes this honour upon him, but he that is called of God, as* Aaron *was*, Heb. v. 4. Therefore the apoſtle ſaith expreſsly, the Lord ſpake thus, I have ſaid, *Thou art a prieſt for ever*, that was his call; and for the confirmation of it, he eſtabliſhed it by an oath, *The Lord hath ſworn thou art a prieſt for ever*, Heb. vii. 21. And if Chriſt himſelf takes not upon him to diſpoſe of the ſins of men, much leſs is it in the power of any meer creature. It is not in the power of any righteouſneſs we do, tho' ever ſo compleat, no nor of our faith, to lay iniquity upon Chriſt; *The Lord lays, Chriſt bears, and faith beholds this iniquity*

iniquity thus laid by him, and borne by Chriſt; and ſo the ſoul receives comfort upon the apprehenſion of it. None but the Lord can poſſibly lay iniquity upon Chriſt, becauſe none hath to do with the diſpoſing of it but he; *Againſt thee, thee only, have I ſinned, and done evil in thy ſight*; yet he had ſinned againſt *Uriah* and his wife; but properly the ſin was againſt God, as that ſin was a tranſgreſſion of his law: if the debt be God's, who hath power to diſpoſe of it, either to take it off the principal, or transfer it to a ſurety, but he that is the creditor? What hath any man to do with another man's debt?

Again, None but the Lord can diſpoſe of iniquity, becauſe none hath ſo much intereſt in Chriſt as he hath; it is a burthen of a heavy weight, and he muſt have great intereſt that can prevail with him to bear it. Tho' it is true, we, the ſons of men, partake of abundance of comfort in the diſcharge of ſin by Chriſt; yet his primary intention in bearing it, was not the ſalvation of man, but the ſatisfaction of his Father; *Lo, I come, to do thy will*, Heb. x. 9. *This is my meat and drink, to do the will of him that ſent me*, John iv. 34. *Father, I have glorified thee on earth, therefore glorify me*, John xvii. 1.---4, 5. Still the eye of Chriſt ran upon the pleaſuring of his Father; this is that which made him ſo hearty in bearing ſin, *The pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand*, Iſa. liii. 10.

Again, None could fit Chriſt to bear ſin but the Lord, therefore none elſe could lay it on him: a body he muſt have, or he could not bear ſin: the God-head cannot bear ſin; *And a body*, ſaith

ſaith Chriſt, *haſt thou prepared me*, Heb. x. 5. all the world could not prepare a fit body to bear ſin for Chriſt; a body natural is but weak; and too weak to bear itſelf up under ſuch a weight. A body there muſt be that is ſuper-natural, ſteeled and ſupported; and this alſo is the meer work of the Lord: *Iſa.* xlii. 6. *Behold my ſervant, whom I uphold*; ſaith he, God muſt uphold him; *I will keep thee, I will help thee, I will ſtrengthen thee, I will hold thine hands.*

Finally, None but the Lord could requite Chriſt for ſuch a ſervice as this; it is fit he ſhould have his pay for his pains: the Lord tells him plainly, that upon the terms of bearing iniquity, let him aſk of him, and he ſhall *have the Heathen for his inheritance, and the utmoſt parts of the earth for his poſſeſſion*, Pſal. ii. 8. Nay, he ſaith, becauſe he was *obedient to the death, even the death of the croſs, therefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name*, Phil. ii. 8, 9.

It ſhould therefore ſerve to put the people of God upon the admiration of the great love of God, (ſeeing it is only the Lord that layeth iniquity upon Chriſt) to give unto him the praiſe of the glory of his grace: oh, let nothing go away with that, ſeeing none but the Lord doth the thing!

And to this end, beloved, the Lord muſt open your eyes that you may ſee it; it is he alone that doth it; but till you ſee it, whatever you may think of yourſelves, you will ſacrifice to nets and drags inſtead of him: if righteouſneſs ſeem to be the eaſing of burthens in ſpirit; then that ſhall, and will be exalted above meaſure: from whence proceed

proceed theſe ſtrange expreſſions, oh, the omnipotency of faſting, prayer, and repentance! What is this but to give the glory of the Lord to our ſervices, as if they diſcharged us of our ſins, when it is he only that diſcharges us of them? But I muſt haſten.

There is another obſervable paſſage in theſe words, more obſervable indeed than heeded by moſt; and that is to be taken from the circumſtance of time, when the Lord laid iniquity upon Chriſt: the text ſaith, *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* Satan knows well enough of what great conſequence this circumſtance of time is, both to the manifeſtation of the glory of God's grace, and to the eſtabliſhment of the comforts of his people; and therefore he hath raiſed a foul duſt to miſguide poor wretches, that they may not lay hold upon it, and the comfort that will flow from it. The text ſaith not, the Lord doth, or will lay, iniquity on him; much leſs that the time is over, and he will not now do it.

Satan is very buſy with tender, ignorant hearts, either to perſwade them that the work is now a doing, or hereafter ſhall be done, but not yet done, or the time is overſlipped; it might have been done, if men had not neglected the opportunity; but now it is too late; it is never to be done.

The laſt of theſe hath troubled the hearts of many people; whence come theſe expreſſions; I have neglected the day of my viſitation, ſaith one; I had the opportunity, the preſence of the Spirit of God, my fear is, that was the day of God's grace to me, but I have let it ſlip; and now

now there is no more hope left for me: but, beloved, let the evident word of the Lord himſelf be your guide, and know, that every thing that is ſpoken, contrary to the mind of the Lord revealed in it, is but the natural fruit of the father of lies, who is a lyar from the beginning. The Lord hath laid iniquity upon Chriſt: hath he done it already, and is it now to be done? Nay, hath he done it, and doth he revoke it, and will not ſuffer it to be done? The point then briefly is this.

This gracious act of the Lord's laying iniquity upon Chriſt, is not now, or hereafter to be done, much leſs a thing he never wills to be done, but it is a thing he hath already done.

Every ſchool-boy will be able to tell you, that this expreſſion [*hath laid*] imports the time paſt, the word being in the preterperfect tenſe; it is not in the preſent tenſe, the Lord layeth; nor in the future tenſe, the Lord will lay; but in the preterperfect tenſe, the Lord hath done it; it is an act paſt. I remember what was ſaid unto that reſolute king; *Let not him that putteth on the harneſs boaſt himſelf, as he that puts it off*, 1 Kings xx. 11. Beloved, you know, when armies go out, there are tremblings of heart, what the ſucceſs may be, till the fight be over; when the victory is gotten, then there is joy, the thing is done. When a poor priſoner lies in priſon condemned, tho' he have friends to beg his pardon; while that is in agitation, and not actually done, he is in ſuſpence, between fear and hope, and reſtleſs in ſpirit; but when the act of grace is once paſt, and the king's hand and ſeal to it, the thing is done, then his ſpirit comes to have reſt: even ſo the reſt of your

ſpirits

ſpirits will lye in this, not that a thing is in writing; or that there are previous acts to be done to produce this act of laying iniquity upon Chriſt; but that the thing is diſpatched to your hands before; you may ſee it at this inſtant done and finiſhed: tho' the Lord in himſelf be unchangeable, yet our unbelieving hearts are ſuſpicious of it, and we are ready to cry, "A bird in the hand, "is worth two in the buſh:" now to condeſcend to the weakneſs of men, he is pleaſed, not that the bird ſhould be in the buſh, but in our hands; not that he ſhould have his mercies within himſelf, but he paſſes them over, and gives the poſſeſſion of them to us, that ſo we may be the ſecurer in them.

I doubt not, beloved, but by that time, the truth is cleared to you, you will find abundance of eſtabliſhment in it ſo cleared; therefore we ſhall endeavour to let you know (as fully as poſſibly we may) *when it was, that the Lord laid iniquity upon Chriſt.*

But before we fall upon that particular, there is one caution I ſhall recommend to your conſideration, as very neceſſary to be conſidered, for the avoiding of confuſion; which is this, that you carefully diſtinguiſh between the Lord's ſole and only act of laying iniquity upon Chriſt, and the believer's act of applying this grace. We are now upon the former conſideration, the Lord's ſole and only act without the creature, in laying iniquity upon Chriſt.

I find, beloved, that too many poor wretches, out of ignorance, not underſtanding diſtinctly the courſe of God's proceedings with men, are apt to confound

confound God's ſole act of laying, and the believer's act of applying together, as if they were both one; as if our ſins were laid upon Chriſt, only when we believe; and as if that were the only thing, whereby they are laid upon him; but it is certain, that theſe are diſtinct acts: I hope I ſhall not need to trouble myſelf, or you, much, to make it appear that they are; the agent acting, and the inſtrument manifeſting, are different. Tho' the Lord gives men to believe; yet the putting forth of that act is man's, by the power of the Lord: as for the laying of iniquity itſelf upon Chriſt, this is ſolely the Lord's own act; our application doth but introduce the knowledge of that which the Lord hath done before, and ſo we come to have the comfort. Now it is true, indeed, that in reſpect of the application of this grace to ourſelves, *The laying of iniquity upon Chriſt*, may be conſidered either preſent or future; that is, at this preſent inſtant, a perſon may believe this grace of God, and ſo here is now an application of it; and poſſibly one, that doth not for the preſent believe, and apply it to himſelf, may believe, and in that reſpect, the applying it, may be future; but for the act itſelf, of laying iniquity upon Chriſt, that is the Lord's, and is neither preſent, nor future, but was before, and is already paſt and gone.

The truth is, there is not poſſibly any perſon can truly believe his iniquities are laid upon Chriſt, except there be a previous act of the Lord's laying them on him; the Lord's act of laying, muſt go before our act of applying it to ourſelves. It is not poſſible for any man to act any thing, but

there muſt be an object in being, about which it is converſant. Suppoſe a man believe his ſins are laid upon Chriſt, I would fain know, whether his believing be true or falſe; if he believe indeed, he hath a foundation for this faith of his, and what is that? He hath a grant from the Lord, that is the very being of his faith; a grant, I ſay, he finds out, that is a ſtirring up of his believing: now ſuppoſe I am to believe the forgiveneſs of my ſins, what muſt be the ground of this my believing? The Lord muſt make his grant to me, and finding that, I have ground to believe it; then whenſoever this grant was made, the thing that I am to believe, was done in reſpect of God's act: now we can find no grant, but as the Lord reveals the ſame in the word of his grace to us; when, therefore, that which is the foundation of my faith, was made, then the act of God was made to me, which I apply to myſelf.

If the Lord's laying iniquity upon Chriſt, has being, at the ſame inſtant men believe, then the grant, which men believe, hath its firſt being then; ſo all grants, upon which men are to believe, muſt be new and immediate revelations, or they muſt be founded in the word of grace; if they be founded in that, then they were there before we believed; and if they were there before we believed, then the Lord, for his part, had paſſed over all that he intends to paſs over. Doth he paſs over any thing anew to men, beſides what is in the word of grace? Then that muſt be by a new revelation; and who can reſolve of that?

The word, and that alone, is ſufficient to make the man of God perfect, and fit for every good work.

The

The mind of God is wholly contained in this word; and therefore it muſt needs be a miſtake in the minds of people, that God then begins to paſs over ſuch an act to them, that their iniquity is laid upon Chriſt, upon their believing; I ſay, believing follows, and gathers its ground from what God hath done already.

I have heard ſome argue, that God lays iniquity upon Chriſt, juſt then when men believe; becauſe the act, and the object about which it is converſant, are relatives, and therefore are in nature together; and are both as the Son and the Father, the Father is no ſooner a Father, but the Son is a Son.

But, beloved, here is a miſtake; it is not faith that gives being to this act, or grant, that our iniquities ſhould be laid upon Chriſt; it is the Lord alone that gives being to it, and it is his act; ſo that it is true, iniquity is not laid upon Chriſt, till he lays it; but it follows not, that it was not laid upon him, till our act of believing goes along with it; becauſe that doth not give being to it, but is only a manifeſtation of that, which was before. This then is carefully to be premiſed, and obſerved, namely, the difference between the Lord's act of laying iniquity upon Chriſt, and the act of a believer, to apply that grace; concerning the latter, it is preſent to ſome, and future to others, as men believe; but the act of laying iniquity upon Chriſt, is ſolely the Lord's, and was done before, and is not to be done.

Now let us come to conſider, when the Lord laid iniquity upon Chriſt; he hath done it, it is paſt: but when did he do it, will you ſay? For

the opening of this truth, there are ſome ſpecialities to be conſidered, as,

1. That the Lord laid iniquities upon Chriſt, by way of obligation.

2. By way of execution.

3. By way of his own application thereof to his people; for, as you ſhall hear, we muſt diſtinguiſh between God's application of this grace, and their application of it; this we ſhall ſpeak to afterwards.

We come now to conſider, when the Lord laid iniquities upon Chriſt, and for that you muſt know; 1. the Lord laid them upon him, by way of obligation; I mean thus, he did then lay iniquity upon Chriſt, when he obliged himſelf to it: you know when a man once enters into bond, tho' peradventure, the day of payment may be ſome months, or years, after the bond is ſealed; yet when he enters into bond, he delivers that as his act and deed; at the firſt inſtant of the ſealing of the bond, then is the thing done; other ſpecialities, it may be, are cancelled, and the whole debt remains according to the tenor of the bond. So when the Lord entered into bond, he tied himſelf to lay iniquity upon Chriſt; then was his act and deed; then were all the ſpecialities cancelled, as they were charged upon us; and when was that? It was from all eternity; I ſay, God tied himſelf irrevocably then to lay iniquity upon Chriſt, even from all eternity; then he did it in his own determinate council; I mean, when in his own council, he determined it ſhould be done. God's determination and reſolution, that Chriſt ſhould bear the ſins of men, were the act of God's laying them upon him; and tho', unhappily to this church, the everlaſting

laſting decree, and doctrine of God's election of men, hath been, and is ſtill, ſuppreſſed as a dangerous truth; yet you muſt know, beloved, that the foundation of all the gracious acts of God, was laid in this decree of election: the Lord ſat down, as a man may ſpeak with reverence, by himſelf, and drew out a draught of all the particular paſſages, eſpecially concerning his own people, how he would order and diſpoſe every thing in its ſeaſon; and, in this eternal council, he ſet down his fiat, It ſhould be ſo; and this fiat of the Lord, from all eternity, did make the thing itſelf an irrevocable act. You know, that the royal aſſent makes an act, and it is a real ſtatute; councils having contrived before, that which it yields unto. Now it may be that, that which royal aſſent makes an act, may not be of preſent uſe; that is, people may not have preſent occaſion of ſuch an act; ſuppoſe it be an act of grace; yet, notwithſtanding, from the firſt inſtant of that aſſent, it hath as much force in it, as when occaſion of uſe cometh, which is derived from it: ſo alſo the act of laying of iniquity upon Chriſt, that, that gives being to it, as an act, and ſo gives life to it, is the royal aſſent of God. When God firſt ſet his aſſent, that iniquity ſhould be borne by Chriſt, this made it an act as firm, good, and true, as ever will be. When a man hath occaſion to make uſe of a ſtatute of grace, there is no addition of force, added to it, when it is ſued out for uſe; it hath no more virtue in itſelf, than at firſt inſtant, when the royal aſſent was put to it: when we, in time, by the grace of the Lord, make application of this, that our iniquities are laid upon

Chriſt; this application of ours, gives not any being at all unto the thing; the grant, that had as much ſtrength and force in it, at the firſt aſſenting to it, as it hath when it is applied, or as ever it will have. Now, beloved, this is certain, that the royal aſſent is a binding act, even from the very firſt inſtant of it; kings, when they give it to an act of grace, are not only bound to make it good, when any perſon ſues it out, but they themſelves are bound, at that inſtant, when they paſſed it, that they cannot revoke it. The Lord, it is true, was free in himſelf how to diſpoſe of the ſins of men; but when he had contrived for his own glory's ſake, and his people's good, that their iniquities ſhould be tranſacted to Chriſt, this counſel, tho' ſecret within his own breaſt, obliged him for-ever to the thing; the Lord is unchangeable, *I am God, and change not, therefore ye, the ſons of* Jacob, *are not conſumed*, Mal. iii. 6. Now, beloved, ſhould there be any time in which the Lord ſhould not lay iniquity upon Chriſt, after his former aſſent to it, how could he be unchangeable? He did aſſent then, now he will not; is not this changeableneſs? So that the whole truth, faithfulneſs, and uprightneſs of God, is tied to make good the everlaſting laying of iniquity upon Chriſt, by virtue of this act of his own aſſent to it.

(2.) As there was a ſecret obligation upon God, which was from all eternity, to lay iniquity upon Chriſt; ſo there is a publick and manifeſt tie upon him, when he openly, in the face of his people, and to them binds himſelf, even to their apprehenſions, that they ſee that he is obliged to it; then did the Lord lay the iniquity of his people upon

upon Chriſt openly, when he did openly bind himſelf by covenant to do it; and that he did from the firſt moment they were in any tranſgreſſion whatſoever. When *Adam*, as a common perſon, had ſinned for himſelf and his whole poſterity, the Lord bound himſelf by promiſe and covenant, to ſecure his people from ſuch tranſgreſſion by his Son Chriſt; *I will put enmity between thy ſeed and her ſeed*, (ſpeaking to the ſerpent of the woman, that is, *Eve*) *he ſhall break thine head, and thou ſhalt bruiſe his heel*, Gen. iii. 15. As if he had ſaid, thou haſt got a great catch by getting the ſons of men under thy clutches, as thy prey; thou haſt bruiſed his heel by reaſon of tranſgreſſion; but the ſeed of the woman ſhall break thine head; the head, that is the ſeat of principality; therefore they that have the principality are called heads in ſcripture. Now, ſaith the text, *He ſhall break thine head*; that is, that, wherein conſiſteth thy chiefeſt ſtrength, ſhall be bruiſed and broken to pieces; becauſe that, wherein the ſtrength of headſhip lieth, ſhall be taken away from thee; the ſeed of the woman ſhall take away ſin, wherein the headſhip of ſatan lieth. Now, as ſoon as the Lord had publiſhed this to men, he was under bond, that iniquity ſhould be borne by Chriſt.

Now you are not to conceive that this publication of God's grace is the firſt act of it by him, he having acted it in his councils long before; therefore, the apoſtles being met together, on occaſion of perſecution, began to pray, and in prayer had this clauſe, *They have done* (ſpeaking of their cruelty to Chriſt) *whatever thy hand and thy coun-*

ſel determined before to be done, Acts iv. 28. By which it plainly appears, that the act is not paſſed really in being in the publication of it; which is but an iſſue flowing from this firſt ſpring, from whence it derived its original; namely, the determinate council of the Lord. It was upon record in heaven before; now, upon occaſion, the record is taken out and publiſhed. As I ſaid before, it is royal aſſent, which gives being to an act of grace; it is not the publication of it in print, and making it known to the world, that gives being to it a jot; indeed that gives people the comfort of it, but royal aſſent gives being to the thing; publication doth not give ſo much as confirmation to it; only it gives ſettlement of ſpirit to the ſtaggering hearts of people, that know not what to do, nor where to ſet the ſole of their feet for reſt, till they have this grace publiſhed; and then venture themſelves upon it, when publiſhed.

Concerning the laying of iniquity upon Chriſt, he doth not make a new act; all that he doth is but the publication and manifeſtation of it; not that the Lord is bound now, and not before, but that we might know he is bound, and have the ſtronger conſolation. In *Eph.* i. 4. the apoſtle ſpeaks expreſsly and fully touching God's eternal act, that gives being to this grace of laying iniquity upon Chriſt; and alſo, that, by which perſons reap the fruit of it, when they come to know it; he ſaith, *He hath choſen us in him before the foundation of the world.* And afterwards he tells us, this reaches to the *forgiveneſs of our ſins.* There you ſhall find, that tho' the Lord was pleaſed to publiſh this grace, concerning laying of iniquities

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on Chriſt, yet it hath not its beginning then, but *before the foundation of the world was laid.* In brief, you muſt know, that tho' ſin in creatures was not actually in being from all eternity; nay, tho' Chriſt, as having a body prepared, was not himſelf in being from eternity; yet the omnipreſent eye of God, that fore-caſts things with himſelf, that afterwards ſhould come to paſs, had every particular perſon in his own thoughts from all eternity, that ſhould come in all after time, and before him they appeared, as if they had been actually exiſting then; and he had not only their perſons, but in this omnipreſent eye of his, he had every ſuch tranſgreſſion, that by every ſuch perſon of his own, ſhould from the firſt to the laſt of their being, be committed; he had all this at once in his eye. And having this platform before him, as if all were then in being, he ſets down his own act of royal aſſent, that for every ſuch perſon as he had choſen, and for every ſuch tranſgreſſion that ſhould be committed at ſuch and ſuch a time, by ſuch and ſuch perſons, he would accept of Chriſt whom he would fit to bear their tranſgreſſions; and, from that eternity to eternity, the Lord reckons all things as he had then and there ſet them down. We actually commit ſin to-day, yeſterday, and ſo ſhall again to-morrow; in the eternal councils of God, the very ſin of this day, of yeſterday, and of to morrow, were all open in the eyes of God; the Lord, from all eternity, looking upon theſe tranſgreſſions, aſſented to this, that Chriſt, for whom he would prepare a body, ſhould indeed, in time, actually bear them all; but, in God's account, they muſt be reckoned as borne

borne from all eternity by Chriſt, by way of obligation. Thus you ſee how the Lord, by way of obligation, lays the inquities of men upon Chriſt, and when he did thus lay them on him.

2. The Lord did lay the iniquities of men upon Chriſt by way of execution; I mean thus, he laid iniquity upon him, as he did, in time, ſerve the execution upon him: as I told you before, a man makes himſelf actually a debtor, when he firſt enters into bond, and he goeth all that time for a debtor, from the ſealing of the bond; but the debt is properly laid upon him when an execution is ſerved upon him, and he is cauſed to make good the bond, and pay the debt; now is he actually called to account. The Lord, from all eternity, reckoned Chriſt to be the bearer of the tranſgreſſion of men; but in time he ſerved the execution upon him.

Now it would be queſtioned when it was, that the Lord did this; that is, when he actually and really charged ſin upon him?

For the underſtanding of this, you muſt know that there is a twofold ſerving the execution upon Chriſt; it may be conſidered either virtual, or actual, and real. The execution is ſerved upon Chriſt in the virtue of it, from the firſt inſtant that ever there was a tranſgreſſion committed; and not only when firſt committed, and from thence to the time of his ſuffering, but alſo afterwards, from the time he ſuffered, to the end of the world. You muſt of neceſſity admit of this diſtinction between the virtual and actual ſerving of the execution upon Chriſt; and the ground of it is this, that tho' the Lord took Chriſt for paymaſter

maſter for all the ſins in the world; yet he was pleaſed to give him a long day of payment; the debt indeed run on from the fall of *Adam*, and ſo continued, and will continue to the end of the world; but Chriſt was not to come into the world till the fulneſs of time, *Gal.* iv. 4, 5. *And, when the fulneſs of time was come, God ſent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons:* therefore it muſt follow, that either there could be no diſcharge from the time of the firſt commiſſion of ſin, till Chriſt appeared in the fleſh; or that before the actual payment that Chriſt made, there was the vertue of laying iniquity upon him; by which there was a diſcharge given before he had actually paid the debt.

To clear the point a little to you, conſider, a man ſends his ſon to the univerſity, to ſuch a tutor, who knows he is a rich man, and therefore, ſaith he, I will agree with you thus; I will teach your ſon ſo many years, and, at three years end, you ſhall pay all the arrear for the time paſt; and whatſoever it will come to for three years more. Now the father, according to the agreement made, comes at one time, and reckons for all that is paſt for the tutorage of his ſon, and lays down that all at once; and, for the time to come, ſaith he, there is ſo much more, I will pay all that too, and make but one payment of all. So it is with Chriſt, he takes upon himſelf to diſcharge the ſons of men of all their tranſgreſſions; the Lord takes Chriſt for it, he knows he is one that is mighty, and is contented therefore to lay his help upon him: now the time runs

runs on from the firſt ſin committed, till the fulneſs of time that he comes; here is no payment all this while, no, not of a farthing; yet God ſtill diſcharges men of their ſins; he diſcharged *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *David*, and all the reſt of the Fathers; and *bleſſed they were in that their iniquities were forgiven, and their ſins were covered*, Pſal. xxxii. 1. here God acquits theſe men, but where is the payment? All this while he hath no ſatisfaction yet; why, he depends on Chriſt for ſatisfaction when the day of payment comes; and ſo ſatisfaction is made virtually before it be done by Chriſt actually: and ſo for after-times; Chriſt came in the fulneſs of time, and reckoned with the Father, and he hath ſo much of him for all that is paſt, and as much for all after-times to the end of the world; ſaith Chriſt to the Father, here is ſo much for every one of mine, that they have run out for the time that is paſt; and here is ſo much for every one of them that ſhall come after; they will commit ſo many ſins in time to come; here is ſo much for all that they ſhall commit.

Now there was a pitch'd time wherein God ſerved execution actually upon him; and that was when God forſook this Son of his; when he called him forth, and charged ſin upon him, and laid load upon load on him, as the deſert of tranſgreſſion [x]. Beloved, you know what our Saviour ſaith

[x] This is charged as an error by D. W. in his *Goſpel-Truth*, &c. p. 28. that the time when our ſins were actually laid on Chriſt was when he was nailed to the croſs; but the Dr. does not ſay, that this was the firſt time ſin was charged upon him, and he bore it; for he after obſerves, that God charged it upon him in the garden, when he was *heavy unto death*, and ſaid, *If it be poſſible let this cup paſs from me*; tho', when he was

faith himſelf, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Now was the execution ſerved, and God charged the payment upon him, when he ſaid, *I am heavy unto death*; *Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me*; here was the time of payment, and of ſatisfying God. This was the very time of the end of ſeventy weeks, wherein there was an end put to ſin, and the finiſhing of tranſgreſſion: and you muſt know this, beloved, that, in this laying iniquity upon Chriſt by way of execution, there was the matter of the greateſt truſt in the world, between God the Father and his Son Chriſt: it had been a toilſome thing to Chriſt to pay every debt, one after another, as it was taken up; and therefore, to ſave all this trouble, God was contented all ſhould be paid at once; and likewiſe that Chriſt ſhould do all in equality of time; not pay all at firſt, nor at laſt, but in the middle time; as if a man were to take up wares at ſeveral times, ſome at the beginning of the year, and ſome at the end of it, and pay all his money at the middle of it: ſo was it between God and his Son; ſomething was to be paid at the beginning of the world; and ſomething at the end of it; now to make an equality, Chriſt pays all at the middle time, or ſome good time

was offered upon the croſs as a ſacrifice for ſin, was more properly and preciſely the time when ſin was charged and laid upon him, and he bore it; the apoſtle ſays, That *Chriſt was once offered to bear the ſins of many*, Heb. ix. 28. ſo that it was when he was offered up, that ſin was laid upon him, and he bore it; yea, he was offered up, that it might be done, and appear to be done: the apoſtle *Peter*, is ſtill more expreſs for this; *Who his own ſelf bare our ſins, in his own body, on the tree*, 1 Pet. ii. 24. hence it appears, that it was upon the croſs that ſin was charged, and the load was laid, and there borne.

time before the end; God is content to truſt him from the beginning until the fulneſs of time; and he did ſo truſt him, that he diſcharged all the ſins of the elect before payment, as if already done. At the fulneſs of time, Chriſt comes and pays all for the time paſt, and ſo diſchargeth that truſt of God the Father upon him; and moreover pays to the full for all the ſins that ſhould be committed afterwards; ſo that now the Son truſts the Father, that he will reckon right with him, and deal juſtly with him. The price is fully paid into the hands of the Father, for all the elect to the end of the world, at that inſtant that Chriſt ſuffered; yet the value of this price is to be made out many hundreds of years after; wherein the Father is to give out unto man the worth of that Chriſt paid, even to the end of the world, as if he had not been paid before.

So that, in brief, look upon the execution, or rather the ſerving of the execution, that is, the actual laying iniquity upon Chriſt; this was done at that inſtant when he was upon the croſs, and God nailed the ſins of men to it; and from that time there was not one ſin to be reckoned either to believers, who are the members of Chriſt, or to himſelf; he having then made ſatisfaction, and upon it given out to the world, *it is finiſhed:* what was finiſhed? the payment of the price ſo long looked for. The utmoſt farthing is now laid down, therefore the prophet *Iſaiah*, in his 53*d* chapter, ſaith expreſsly, that when the Lord beheld the travail of his ſoul, he was then ſatisfied, when the work of the Lord was in the hand of Chriſt; that is, when he was actually managing the

the buſineſs of bearing the weight of ſin; then the pleaſure of the Lord proſpered on him; then the work went on with ſuch ſucceſs in his hand, that it proſpered; then came this iſſue of his labour, that he obtained his Father's pleaſure that he aimed at; when the thing comes into the hands of Chriſt, then the pleaſure of the Lord goeth on.

There yet remains one thing very conſiderable, and that is the application of this grace to particular perſons, and the time when the Lord comes to this man, and to that woman, and calls out perſons particularly, and applies it to them, as the grace of this perſon individually, *Thy iniquity is laid upon Chriſt.* This requires more time to open it, than now we have; and therefore in the afternoon we ſhall have opportunity elſewhere.

SERMON XXIII.

Our Sins already laid on Chriſt.

ISAIAH liii. 6.

And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

I HAVE elſewhere made ſome progreſs in theſe words; which indeed contain in them the fulneſs of the myſtery of free-grace. It is iniquity itſelf, as well as the puniſhment of it, that the Lord laid upon Chriſt; he bare the ſins of men, as well as he was wounded for them: this is a real tranſaction; Chriſt ſtands as very

very a ſinner in God's eye, as the reprobate, tho' not as the actor of ſin; yet as he was the ſurety, the debt became as really his, as it was the principal's before it became the ſurety's; and this tranſlation of our iniquities from us unto Chriſt, is the ſole and only act of the Lord himſelf; none but he could lay iniquity on him.

The *fourth* thing conſiderable in the words, is, *The Lord hath done it already:* it is not, the Lord doth lay, or will lay, iniquity upon Chriſt; but he hath laid it upon him; the buſineſs is not to be done now. Thou haſt, peradventure, this day committed this, and that, and the other ſin; yet the Lord is not now to lay it upon Chriſt; it is done long ago.

We have entered upon this point elſewhere this morning: and here I briefly propoſe to you this, for the better clearing of the time, when the Lord laid iniquity upon Chriſt; and I will leave it with you as a caution to diſtinguiſh between the Lord's act of laying iniquity, and the believer's act of applying this grace to himſelf. When we believe our iniquities are laid on Chriſt, is one time; when God lays them, is another: God, long before we believed, laid them upon Chriſt; and, when we believe, the foundation of it is an ancient grant that we find upon record, enacted and entered long ago: faith hath a word of truth, if it be true faith, whereupon it builds; it looks not for preſent revelation of things not extant before, but takes them as it finds them upon record. When the record is firſt entered, nay, when the act was firſt made, from whence it was entered, then was the grant; then God did his part in laying

ing iniquity upon Chriſt; and we, in time, by the grace of the Lord given to us, to believe, find out his ancient grant, which now at believing, becomes apparent, and ſo comes our application. Application is, at preſent, or may be hereafter; but the laying iniquity itſelf, is an act paſſed long before by God.

For the better underſtanding of God's laying iniquity upon Chriſt, when he did it, there are theſe three things conſiderable.

1. The Lord's laying iniquity upon Chriſt by way of obligation.

2. By way of execution.

3. By way of application of this benefit to us.

1. God's act of laying iniquity upon Chriſt by way of obligation; ſo he laid it upon him, as ſoon as ever he was bound to it; a bond is a man's act and deed before payment. As ſoon as ever God bound himſelf, the iniquity was laid upon Chriſt; for he had forfeited his own faithfulneſs, if he had not fulfilled it. Now the time wherein he thus laid it on Chriſt, was from all eternity. Royal aſſent gives being to any act of grace. Before there could be any believing of this grace, God's aſſent, by his determinate council, gave being to it.

2. Then there was the laying iniquity on Chriſt by way of execution; Chriſt from all eternity ſtood ingaged to anſwer for the ſins of men; but God gives him a long day of payment. There is a twofold laying iniquity upon Chriſt by way of execution, the one virtual, and the other real and actual: the virtual laying iniquity on Chriſt, was long before payment, but the other at it. *Abraham* ſinning, his ſins were laid on Chriſt; God laid his

execution upon him, for the ſins of *Abraham*; and yet, notwithſtanding, Chriſt was not actually called to account: where obſerve, that here was but a virtual execution ſerved upon Chriſt, not the actual; the real and actual way of execution is, or rather was, when Chriſt actually ſtood out, and had the load of ſin preſſing him down, ſaying, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Now ſin actually lay upon him: *Your iniquities*, ſaith the prophet, *have ſeparated you and your God:* when iniquity came once to ſeparate, then was it actually laid upon Chriſt; he himſelf was ſeparated from his Father, and then did he bear iniquity; then was he called to account for it: but I haſten.

3. There is one thing more very conſiderable, that is, the Lord's laying iniquity upon Chriſt, by way of application; I mean, when it is that the Lord ſingles out this, and that, and the other perſon, now preſent, and takes your very ſins you have committed, and ſhall hereafter, and lays them upon him. Concerning the elect in general, as they were in the eye of the Lord, before they had a real exiſtence, ſo all their iniquities were laid upon Chriſt from eternity; but it muſt needs be granted, beloved, that the particular application of this grace to perſons, that the Lord hath laid my, and thy iniquities upon Chriſt individually, muſt needs be in time. Before a man is in being, there cannot be a perſonal application of the grace of God unto him; God cannot apply his grace to nothing. Tho' in his eye he may apprehend a perſon as being, tho' not actually, and ſo reckon Chriſt as a ſinner, inſtead of him, when he be; yet to ſay ſuch a one by name, thy iniquities are laid upon Chriſt; and the Lord reckons thee in perſon, as ſuch a one who hath not one iniquity he can charge upon thee, this is done in time. Now it will be worth the while, to know when the

Lord

Lord ſingles out particular perſons, and when this grace of laying this man's iniquities upon Chriſt, is appropriated by him to him; for you muſt know, that there is a twofold appropriation of God's grace of laying iniquity upon Chriſt. There is God's application, and man's application; God's application is, when he himſelf ſays from heaven, that he loves this very perſon; and that his iniquities are carried away by Chriſt. Man's application is, when God gives to him to believe, and by this act, to be perſwaded that he hath done it: we are yet upon the firſt kind of application, when the Lord himſelf applies to ſuch a particular perſon, that his iniquities are laid upon Chriſt.

In the clearing of this, beloved, I muſt tell you, I dare not confine myſelf to the judgment of any man under heaven; nor pin my faith upon any man's ſleeve; to conceive ſuch a thing truth, becauſe ſuch men ſpeak it; and therefore I ſhall deſire you, if you be ſincere, and mean that the word of the Lord ſhall be your guide, to reſolve you in ſuch comfortable truths, to mind not ſo much what I, or any man ſay, as what the Lord himſelf ſaith; and according to the clearneſs of the Lord, in his own word, ſo ſet you up your reſt.

And that you may be the better reſolved of this truth, ſo much inquired into, when the Lord laid my, and thy iniquities, upon his Son Chriſt; know that he laid the iniquities of every elect perſon two ways upon him: 1. Secretly; 2. Manifeſtly and openly: in the ſecret application of this grace unto a man, he hath a full diſcharge; and in the manifeſtation hereof, in the ſecond way of application, he hath the comfort of it.

As concerning the Lord's ſecret applying unto a perſon, the grace of laying his iniquity upon Chriſt; I ſhall deſire you, beloved, (that you may ſee in one view, both how the Lord did this,

and the time when he doth it: it is a ſecret thing, for a time, to thoſe for whom he doth it,) to look into *Rom.* ix. 10, 11, 12, 13. a place very well worth your conſideration, that hath been much canvaſſed; yet, for all this, I ſee the evidence of the Spirit of the Lord, is not ſo fully ſeen as poſſible it might be. The apoſtle there tells us, of the admirable free grace of God, and how that the Lord in ſhewing mercy, intends that it may appear to all the world, that what he doth, is merely and ſolely of grace, and for his own ſake; and for the illuſtration of it, he bringeth in an example of *Rebecca* and her ſons, *Jacob* and *Eſau*, ſaying, *When* Rebecca *conceived by one, even by our father* Iſaac, *the children being yet unborn, neither having done any good or evil, (that the purpoſe of God, according to election, might ſtand, not of works, but of him that calleth) it was ſaid unto her, the elder ſhall ſerve the younger; as it is written,* Jacob *have I loved, but* Eſau *have I hated:* mark the words I pray you well. Out of this paſſage I ſhall note theſe particulars to you: firſt, you have here expreſſed the Lord's declaring himſelf perſonally and individually unto the one, *Jacob*, I mean, that he loved him: there was a love from eternity to him, as he was one among the reſt, in the election of grace; but mark it well, beloved, till there was a ſingle individual perſon, as *Jacob*, the Lord did not ſay, Jacob *have I loved*; therefore you ſhall ſee, here is a perſonal ſingling out of *Jacob* by name, diſtinct from any other whatſoever, and a love pronounced to him, Jacob *have I loved.*

Then conſider next, what kind of love this was, that the Lord here pronounces on *Jacob*; it is a love that is oppoſed to the hatred, wherewith he hated *Eſau*; now what kind of hatred was that? You know the hatred of *Eſau*, was a hatred of rejection; the love of *Jacob*, then, was a love of acceptance;

ceptance; a love, wherewith he received him as one of his own: now then conſider, when the Lord firſt began perſonally to faſten this his love, the love of his juſtification; the text ſaith, *When they were not yet born, neither had done good or evil, that the purpoſe of God might ſtand, according to election, not of works, but of grace, it is ſaid,* Jacob *have I loved*: as much as to ſay, the Lord did not tarry ſome ſpace of time after *Jacob* had a being, till he called him, and then pronounced love unto him, as if there had been no love to him, till he were called; but before he came into the world, while he was yet in the womb; nay, when he was firſt conceived, the Lord pronounced, Jacob *have I loved*; and yet this was a ſecret, that there was any ſuch thing as love to him; he being yet in the womb, and not capable to underſtand, that God did thus love him: ſo that it is plain, there is a ſecret paſſing over of the grace of God, into the poſſeſſion of a particular perſon, before he can know it; and this hath its being in the very conception, as ſoon as he hath any being.

From whence I gather this concluſion, that God applies or appropriates, unto his elect, his grace of diſcharge from all iniquity, and his love, at the very inſtant that ſuch a perſon hath a being in the world.

I am not ignorant, how men differ in their judgments about God's firſt applying his grace unto the ſons of his election: ſome think that God never applies pardon of ſins to them till they be called, and manifeſtly converted, but this cannot be; *Jacob* could not be called in the womb, but he was beloved in it, with ſuch a love, as was oppoſed to the hatred of *Eſau*. And others affirm, that the Lord firſt appropriates juſtification to perſons when they are baptized, and not before; this cannot be neither; for (whereas circumciſion had the place of baptiſm) *Jacob* was declared

manifeſtly to be beloved before circumciſion; and, in *Rom.* iv. 10. the apoſtle (ſpeaking of *Abraham*'s faith) ſaith expreſsly, that the Lord juſtified him, *not being in circumciſion, but in uncircumciſion*; then the Lord ſingled him out, and poſſeſſed him of his own grace before ever he was circumciſed.

Let me tell you, beloved, I conceive people are much miſtaken, and exceedingly trouble their own ſpirits in vain, about the time when the Lord ſhould give them their poſſeſſion of this grace of laying their iniquities upon Chriſt. It is thought by ſome, that in caſe ſuch a perſon ſhould happen to die before God call him to grace, and give to him to believe, that he had been damned; and that elect perſons are in a damnable eſtate, in the time they walk in exceſs of riot, before they are called. Let me ſpeak freely to you, and, in ſo doing, tell you, that the Lord hath no more to lay to the charge of an elect perſon, yet in the height of iniquity, and in the exceſs of riot, and committing all the abominations that can be committed; I ſay, even then, when an elect perſon runs ſuch a courſe, the Lord hath no more to lay to his charge, than he hath to lay to the charge of a believer; nay, he hath no more to lay to the charge of ſuch a perſon, than he hath to lay to the charge of a ſaint triumphant in glory [y]. It is true, ſuch an one, not called, is never able to know individually of himſelf, that he is one that God hath nothing

[y] Not that the ſins of God's elect, in a ſtate of unregeneracy, are not ſins; or that they are not guilty of ſin; nor that they are not deſerving of the wrath of God, for they are *children of wrath even as others*; or that they are not under the ſame ſentence of condemnation: but then, as the elect of God, as they are redeemed by Chriſt, and as he has had their ſins laid upon him, and made full ſatisfaction for them, as full as for the ſaints in heaven, no more charge can be brought againſt 'em by the juſtice of God, than againſt theſe; nor is it poſſible that they ſhould come into a ſtate of actual condemnation and death, or ſuffer the vindictive wrath and juſtice of God:

nothing to charge upon him; becauſe, till calling, God gives not unto men to believe, and it is only believing that is evidence to men of things not ſeen. Things that are not ſeen, are hidden, and ſhall not be known; I mean, the things of God's love ſhall not be known to particular men, till they believe; but, conſidering their real condition, the Lord hath not one ſin to charge upon an elect perſon, from the firſt moment of conception, till the laſt minute of his life; there is not ſo much as original ſin to be laid on him; and the ground is, the Lord hath laid it on Chriſt already; when did he lay ſins on him? when he paid the full price for them. Now, ſuppoſe this perſon, uncalled, commits iniquity, and that this is charged upon him; ſeeing that his iniquities are laid upon Chriſt already, how comes it to paſs they are charged upon him again? How come they to be tranſlated from Chriſt again, and laid upon him? Once they were laid upon Chriſt, it muſt be confeſſed: *For the blood of Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin*, 1 Joh. i. 7. and *by one ſacrifice he hath perfected for-ever them that are ſanctified*, Heb. x. 14. Was there, by one act of Chriſt, the expiation of ſins, and all at once, that are committed from the beginning of the world to the end of it? How comes it to paſs

 that

God: it ſhould be obſerved, that this is ſaid in oppoſition to ſome, who thought elect perſons in a damnable ſtate, before calling; that judgment is come upon them to condemnation ſententially, as they are conſidered in *Adam*, and tranſgreſſors of the law, is owned; and that their ſins are deſerving of eternal damnation will be granted; but that there is a poſſibility of their being damned, muſt be denied; or the election of God would not ſtand ſure, redemption, by Chriſt, would be in vain, and his ſatisfaction muſt be void; they are as ſecure from damnation before calling, as after, though they have not the knowledge, ſenſe, and comfort of it, 'till they believe. The Dr. ſays not, that a man, living and dying in ſuch a ſtate, ſhall be ſaved; but that an elect perſon ſhall be ſaved, who ſhall believe, be changed in heart and life. See the Dr's own anſwer, to the charge againſt him for theſe words, in his Serm. on *Cant.* iv. 7.

that this and that ſin ſhould be charged upon the elect, when they were laid upon Chriſt long before? He did, by that one act of his, expiate all our ſins, or he did not: if he did not expiate them fully, then he did not *ſave to the uttermoſt all that come to God by him*; but, if he did, then all iniquity is vaniſhed and gone; he extracted it out, as ſome plaiſter, of excellent virtue, extracts out the venom of a plague-ſore; ſo Chriſt, by once offering up himſelf, took away all the ſins of the elect at once.

Therefore, beloved, I cannot ſee what the inſtant of time may be wherein the Lord hath not yet taken the ſins of ſuch an elect perſon, and laid them upon Chriſt: ſuppoſe the diſtance of time between birth and baptiſm, which is the neareſt time any man comes to; now, before baptiſm, where lie theſe iniquities? an elect perſon is conceived in ſin, as *David* was, what becomes of it? where lies it? doth it lie upon him now? Then was it not laid upon Chriſt before, and ſo his blood hath not cleanſed from all ſin; he hath not borne all the tranſgreſſions of his people; he hath not perfected for ever them that are ſanctified by one ſacrifice upon the croſs. He that hath one ſin lying upon him, is not perfect till that be taken from him; but ſaith the apoſtle, *By one ſacrifice he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified:* but it ſeems by this, that he hath not perfected them; here is a middle time, or ſome time wherein ſuch a perſon is not perfect; for there is no perfection while there is ſin: if there be ſin upon perſons, how can ſuch be perfect? Therefore know, beloved, to your abundant comfort, that every elect veſſel of God, from the firſt inſtant of his being, is as pure in the eyes of God, from the charge of ſin, as he ſhall be in glory; no more ſin ſhall be reckoned to him now, than he ſhall have in heaven: the ſaints in heaven, how came they to be pure and holy, but only thus, Chriſt bare their iniquities

iniquities for them, and paid the price of their tranſgreſſions? for if they had gone to heaven, and he had not borne them, they muſt have carried them with them; their purity is, that he bore their iniquities, and how did he bear the iniquities of a ſaint in heaven? it is all one with his bearing the ſins of an elect perſon in the womb: the ſcripture makes no ſuch difference, that he bore the ſins of the one more, and otherwiſe, than the ſins of the other; but he equally perfected all the elect at once. The ſaints in heaven were no ſooner perfected, than the elect child in the womb, ſave that there is a diſtance of time between the firſt being of the one, and of the other; for as thoſe now in glory had their firſt purity in the womb, ſo every elect perſon now receives his there.

Beloved, I ſhould be loth to put any new and ſtrange things into the minds of men, that are not fully conſonant to the mind of God recorded in the ſcripture; but I ſee not how it can be avoided, but that Chriſt's ſacrifice muſt be an imperfect one, and that it ſanctifies by halves, and degrees, and ſo he muſt do ſomething more than he hath done, except there be a compleat purging away of ſin all at one inſtant: ſurely, Chriſt muſt do ſomething anew, if ſomething yet remain to be done; if there be any one ſin in the world concerning the elect, to be taken away, he muſt come down again upon the earth to take it away; if there be but a farthing behind, he muſt come down again and pay it, before ever they be perfectly acquitted: but Chriſt left nothing behind him imperfect; and herein the apoſtle ſhews the difference between Chriſt's prieſthood and that after the order of *Aaron*; ſpeaking of *Aaron*'s, he ſaith, *There is a remembrance of ſin again every year*; for that their ſacrifices could not make the comers thereto perfect, and therefore they were fain to reiterate them; but when Chriſt came, he offered himſelf up once

for

for all, and then *ſat down at the right hand of God*: ſurely Chriſt ſhould have had no leiſure to ſit down, if any buſineſs of his were to be done; and if there be a remembrance of ſin again, there muſt be a new ſacrifice, to take away thoſe ſins whereof there is a remembrance; ſo that if you ſuppoſe any elect perſon, at any time, to have ſin not yet taken away, Chriſt muſt come again upon the earth, and offer himſelf up again; for *without ſhedding of blood there is no remiſſion.* Chriſt muſt come to ſhed his blood again, if there be new ſins to be remitted that were not remitted before.

Beloved, this may be of uſe to you in ſome reſpect, in behalf of your children; ſuppoſe they die in the womb, as you have many abortives; the caſe of ſuch a child is the ſame, and as good as is the eſtate of a perſon that hath attained to the moſt evident calling as ever man was called by; for *Jacob* was beloved when *Rebecca* conceived him, while yet he was in the womb; and the Lord appropriates and applies to ſuch a perſon that grace of his, the laying of his iniquity upon Chriſt.

I deny not but that the ſcripture ſpeaks of a time of regeneration, but I deſire you will underſtand, according to the mind of the Holy Ghoſt, what this time is that is ſpoken of: I know it is the time of calling, but this is no prejudice at all to the applying of the grace of God, even from the womb. Take this regeneration for the act of converſion, and that is done in time, and it will amount to this; that tho' God ſecretly gives over the right and title of his own grace to a perſon in the womb, yet he doth not make it known to him till he hath it, till ſuch time as he calls him: in *Gal.* iv. 1, 2, 3. the apoſtle, having ſpoken of the difference between the law and the goſpel, that during the time of being under the law, they were under ſchoolmaſters, tutors, and governors, ſaith, *When faith is come, we are no longer under a ſchoolmaſter*;

maſter; then he follows that with a freſh allegory, and makes uſe of the ſimilitude of an heir, and a child under age; *Now this I ſay*, ſaith he, *that the heir, ſo long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a ſervant, tho' he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father: Even ſo we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world; but when the fulneſs of time was come, God ſent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons.* Wherein I obſerve,

1. That there is an heirſhip during childhood itſelf; *The heir as long as he is a child*, ſaith the apoſtle.

2. That there is this heirſhip when there is no difference between being a ſon and a ſervant; *While he is a child, he differs nothing from a ſervant, though he be Lord of all:* he is an heir, though there be no difference between him and a ſervant, during his childhood: what is the reaſon there is no difference during that? *He is*, ſaith he, *under tutors and governors*; how doth he apply this? *Even ſo we, when we were children, were in bondage under the rudiments of the world: but when the fulneſs of time was come, he ſent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons*; as if he had ſaid, there is a time when a perſon is an heir under age; and there is a time when he comes to enjoy that whereof he is an heir, and differs from a ſervant manifeſtly, as indeed in nature he doth, and did before: a child is an heir, if the firſt born, as ſoon as ever born; nay, when he is firſt conceived in the womb. Suppoſe a man dye eſtated in a great deal of land, leaving his wife but a month gone with child, he leaves his child as heir; yet for all this, there is a long time in the

the womb, and alſo of education, in which this child is uſed as a ſervant; there is no difference appears, he hath no more in poſſeſſion than a ſervant, yet this Child is ſtill an heir: ſo it is with all believers; the elect of God, are the heirs of God; and as they are, ſo the firſt being of them puts them into the right of inheritance; he that is an heir born, is an heir the firſt moment he is conceived: ſo that either you muſt allow, that there is a time when an elect perſon is not an heir, or you muſt confeſs, that there is no time but ſuch a one is a child of God; and, as ſuch, is purged from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit; purged, I mean, by way of imputation, in the reckoning and account of God: tho' ſins be committed afterwards, in reſpect of which there may be for a time no difference between the life of an heir, and the life of a ſervant; yet as this perſon is an heir of all, ſo none of his iniquity is reckoned to him, nor ever ſhall be in this life, nor in the life to come, tho' for the time he doth not know it.

But ſome may be ready to object, how is it poſſible, that from the firſt inſtant of an elect perſon's being, all his ſins ſhould be reckoned as laid upon Chriſt? Can a ſin be laid upon him before it is committed?

I anſwer, Sin is laid upon Chriſt before it is; and it is no abſurdity in reaſon itſelf to ſay ſo: you know it is poſſible a man may buy out treſpaſſes before he doth them; ſuppoſe a man is addicted to hawking and hunting, and muſt treſpaſs upon his neighbour's ground; he may lay down a good large ſum at once, that ſhall countervail all the treſpaſſes that ſhall be done afterwards: beloved, ſhall any man ſay, that there was no treſpaſs borne, paid, and ſatisfied by Chriſt, becauſe there was none acted? what then ſhall become of all the elect that have been in the world ſince Chriſt's coming,

coming, if there be not a real ſerving of ſin upon him, and ſatisfaction made by him, before ſin be committed? What will become of the ſins of the apoſtles, and of the people of God ſince them? all their ſins were committed ſince the reckoning was made; and if of particular perſons in the church, why not ſo of every particular elect perſon by himſelf? If you ſhall have no more ſins laid upon Chriſt, or reckoned to him, but what were committed before he made payment, there will be none of our ſins found to be laid upon him; for all our ſins have been committed ſince he ſuffered.

Some object, and ſay, Chriſt puts us upon prayer, that God would forgive us our treſpaſſes; how can our iniquities be laid upon Chriſt already, when we are to pray that God would forgive them to us? It is a vain thing for us to pray for forgiveneſs, when they were long ago forgiven.

I anſwer, They were reckoned to Chriſt long before we pray for the forgiveneſs of them, and yet we do well in praying for it. We have a common anſwer known to all, there is a twofold forgiveneſs of ſins, a forgiveneſs of ſins in heaven, and in the conſciences of men. Forgiveneſs of ſins in heaven, is that which is acted by God alone; forgiveneſs of ſins in the conſciences of men, is the manifeſtation of his former act. So then to pray for it, is no more but to pray that God would manifeſt to us that he hath forgiven our ſins; and that it may be clear that he hath forgiven them, before we pray for it; and that prayer is grounded upon God's act before-hand made.

Conſider this one thing; I would aſk this of you, you that pray for forgiveneſs of your ſins, do you pray in faith, or not? If not, mark what the apoſtle *James* ſaith, chap. i. 6. *Let him aſk in faith, nothing wavering: he that wavereth, let him not think he ſhall receive any thing of the Lord:*

Lord: beloved, your prayers ſtink in the noſtrils of God, if you do not pray in faith. Well, you pray in faith, you will ſay: if you do, if you pray for the forgiveneſs of ſin in faith, what is the ground of your faith? If you believe, you have a ground for it; you will ſay, the grant and word of God is the ground of it. Well, if that be the ground of your believing, then the grant hath a being before your faith, and ſo conſequently before your prayer is made: as for example, God promiſed forgiveneſs of ſins; now ſin was forgiven by him as ſoon as ever he made the grant and record; at that inſtant, it was made, ſin was forgiven, and God did his part in pardoning the tranſgreſſions of his people. Well then, if you pray in faith that your ſins are forgiven, upon this ground, becauſe God hath made this grant, and you find it upon record; then it ſeems your ſins were forgiven you before your prayer was made. You will ſay, God hath granted this before, and now you pray to God that he would make good that to you which he hath granted before. Beloved, what is this more than to make that evident to you, and to give you the knowledge of that which he hath before granted, that you may have the comfort of it?

In brief, when people pray for any grace that God hath paſſed over to men, all their prayer is, that he would make them perceive that he hath done that for them in ſpecial; ſo that all our prayers get no new thing of God that he hath not done before; only he is pleaſed, when people pray to him according to his own mind, to meet with them in that ordinance, and then to manifeſt to them what ſecretly he had done before for them.

To conclude. If ſo, here is a word of admirable comfort to poor ſouls, in that bitter ſuſpence they uſually are: thou art in a wavering condition; I know not (ſayeſt thou) whether God hath laid

mine

mine iniquities upon Chriſt or no; I hope well, that Chriſt is at work with the Father for me; I hope I ſhall hear well from him. Beloved, your ſuſpence may fall to the ground; your buſineſs is done to your hand already; there is not one gone about to do it in heaven for you now, as if it were in the power and pleaſure of God to grant or not to grant: obſerve the ſaying of the apoſtle, in *Rom.* x. 6, 7, *&c.* that you may have the greater conſolation that God intends to you, ſettledneſs of ſpirit, that the pardon of ſin is ſo firm that you need no more look after it with fear or doubting; where he follows his former diſcourſe, having largely diſputed upon the freeneſs of God's grace, he begins to draw towards a concluſion; for he tells us there expreſsly, *That the righteouſneſs, which is of faith, ſpeaks on this wiſe, Say not in thy heart, who ſhall aſcend up to heaven? that is, to bring Chriſt from thence; nor who ſhall deſcend into the deep? that is, to raiſe Chriſt from the dead: but what ſaith it? the word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart; and this is the word of faith which we preach.* Before, you ſhall find the apoſtle ſpeaking of the eſtabliſhing our own righteouſneſs, and neglecting the righteouſneſs of God; and here he comes, in the cloſure, to ſhew what this righteouſneſs of God is, he preſſeth ſo much upon men, and chargeth them with the neglect of; it is as if he ſhould ſay, You think, you muſt take a great deal of pains, by your own righteouſneſs, to obtain the pardon of your ſins, and what would you have? You will, you muſt, climb up higher, and go down ſteps to do it: but, ſaith he, the righteouſneſs of faith runs in another ſtrain; there will be no clambering up to heaven to fetch Chriſt down, nor going down to hell to fetch him up; there is no ſuch thing to be done, nor required of you: he is come already, therefore you may ſave all your pains, care, and fear; he is in your mouths and in your hearts; he is in you, and with you,

you, already; as if he had ſaid, You may well ſave all your fears, cares, and doubts of your condition, whether Chriſt hath obtained grace with the Father, on your behalf in this point, or no: know that the work is done and finiſhed to your hand; the pardon is come down from heaven already. You know what diſtraction and trouble muſt needs be in the heart of a malefactor condemned to die, as long as his pardon is in agitation, when he hath a friend gone to court to get it for him; he is now in hope that his friend will procure it; he is by-and-by full of fear leſt his buſineſs ſhould miſcarry, and he be executed; but when the pardon is ſealed, and he knoweth it is done, when it is brought to him, and he hath it in his hand, then his heart leaps within him, he hath no joy till then. I tell you, beloved, Chriſt is not now gone to heaven to get a pardon, but he hath got one under ſeal already; it is in your hands, and in your mouths, and at your doors; it is with you, and in you: iniquity is laid on Chriſt already.

Well, hath he done it, and ſhall he change? Will he not be as good as his word? Heaven and earth ſhall paſs, but one word that he hath ſpoken ſhall not fall to the ground. When *Jacob* had got the bleſſing, by deceit, from his father, yet, ſaith he, *I have bleſſed him, and he is bleſſed, and ſhall be bleſſed*; I have ſaid it, and I will ſtand to it. Shall *Iſaac*, a man, ſtand to what he did in bleſſing, tho' out of a miſtake? and ſhall the God of heaven and earth, that did ſuch an act of bleſſing, by laying iniquities upon Chriſt, not upon miſtake, but upon determinate counſel, go from his word? *Let God be true, and every man a liar.* This is like the law of the *Medes* and *Perſians*, that ſhall never be diſannulled; it is enacted and paſſed under hand and ſeal, that he hath laid on Chriſt the iniquities of us all.

The END *of the* FIRST VOLUME.

